

Rumors can kill Forces career — expert

By PETER HAYS
The Daily News

An unfounded allegation of homosexuality is enough to force someone out of a job at a Canadian Forces top-secret submarine tracking station, a security expert said yesterday.

"If the Armed Forces discover someone is a homosexual — or if they think someone is a homosexual and she denies it — then they consider such a person is subject to blackmail," said Maurice Archdeacon, of the security intelligence review committee.

Keitha Coates isn't allowed to talk about her former job in CFS Shelburne, the small southeast

Nova Scotia facility that tracks U.S. and former Soviet submarines across the Atlantic.

The 26-year-old is in Halifax preparing to leave the military after a secret investigation concluded she was homosexual. Coates denies it.

Any hint of denied homosexuality is not tolerated by military investigators "especially in something as sensitive as tracking submarines using the most modern equipment available in the western world," Archdeacon said.

CFS Shelburne has been the focus of previous Forces investigations of suspected homosexuality, unrelated to the Coates case.

News reports from 1985 state "at least" five women of a "homosexual clique" were dismissed from the Forces following a review of the station by the Forces' special investigation unit.

But Forces officials say the counterintelligence unit stopped all similar investigations in November 1990 after a special inquiry by former Ontario judge Rene Marin said there was "no reason whatsoever" for the unit to single out homosexuals.

Coates was informed in writing on Oct. 2, 1991 that she had been investigated by the military, resulting in the conclusion she was a lesbian.

She says she was informed

the inquiry stemmed from accusations made against her in June 1990 while she worked at a U.S. navy submarine tracking station in Oak Harbor, Wash.

She was interviewed by U.S. investigators, and later shipped back to Shelburne, her U.S. work permit withdrawn.

On Oct. 2, 1991 Coates was given a memo stating a Special Career Review Board had deemed her unacceptable for service in the Canadian Forces because she is homosexual.

She was never given a chance to answer the accusations, nor was she informed of the investigation until it had concluded.

DN22/1/92

Lesbian charge ruins navy career

Woman says false accusation ended string of advancements

By PETER HAYS
The Daily News

Keitha Coates is waiting out the last days of a once-promising military career she says was shattered by a false accusation of lesbianism.

Rather than fight the blot on her military record, the 26-year-old Belleville, Ont., native will spend the next two weeks at CFB Halifax while her honorable release is processed.

Coates has agreed to leave the Forces on the condition she not rejoin the service or enter the Forces reserves — conditions that upset her.

But Coates is more angry about the process of investigation that concluded she was a lesbian.

A string of promotions and commendations that marked her five-year military career abruptly ended Oct. 2, when she was given written notice that a special career review board had found her "unacceptable for service in the Canadian Forces."

Under "administrative order 19-20 and the interim policy on homosexuality" she would not be forced out of the military, but was deemed ineligible for training, courses or promotion.

'Retaliated'

Coates said she is not a lesbian, and the Canadian military never asked her if she was homosexual.

Accusations against her arose while she served at a U.S. submarine tracking station at Oak Harbor, Washington, in June 1990. She said a demoted male U.S. navy co-worker accused his former female U.S. navy commanding officer of having sex with Coates at a party.

"This guy got fired from our section, and decided to retaliate," Coates said. A U.S. navy investigation followed, during which Coates was interviewed.

"(The investigators) weren't very nice, and I walked out of the interview, and nobody ever

asked me anything more," she said. "All of a sudden I was just being shipped back to Canada for administrative reasons."

Charges against the female U.S. commanding officer were later dismissed, but Coates' U.S. work permit was withdrawn. She returned to CFS Shelburne in August 1990.

Glowing reviews

A check of her Canadian Forces file at the time showed no record of the incident, but the transfer was a blow to her career.

This despite glowing reviews of her performance during her term at Oak Harbor, including her March 1990 nomination as the U.S. base's "Junior Sailor of the Quarter," on grounds she was a "talented, enthusiastic and motivated individual" who "possesses an uncommon ability to adapt to any situation and consistently produce 'First Rate' results."

Once back at the Canadian submarine tracking facility in southeast Nova Scotia, Coates' career resumed its upward glide. She was promoted twice, to the rank of leading seaman.

In her 1990 year-end assessment, CFS Shelburne's commanding officer Lt.-Cmdr. Philip Kenny rated her performance as "beyond reproach. She has been a consummate professional who has shown outstanding dedication and concern . . . (Her) leadership potential combined with her initiative and dedication ensure her an excellent future."

When contacted yesterday, Kenny would only say he understood Coates had left the military voluntarily.

That's true, Coates agreed — but only because it didn't seem possible to battle the military and win.

"At first I thought I'd fight it, but then I thought, 'I'm tired of having my life constantly scrutinized; I have this label on me that I'm a homosexual,' and so I just decided not to put up with this anymore."

She is aware current military policy on homosexuality is



Keitha Coates: ineligible for training, courses or promotion.

under severe criticism and ministerial review. In 1990, the independent Security Intelligence Review Committee ruled the policy unconstitutional.

But the rules haven't yet been changed, so Coates has consented to leave the Forces under terms that are supposed to leave "no stigma of any sort." They state she is "unable

to adapt to military life," resulting in "an unacceptable administrative burden."

Said Coates: "They're basically saying I'm unable to adapt to military life, but as you can see, I can adapt to military life quite fine."

After her time at CFB Halifax, Coates says she'll study at a Vancouver university.

DN 2/1/92

A CALL TO ACTION !

It's time for our voices to be heard.

During this federal election campaign, we have an opportunity to promote the issues that concern us.

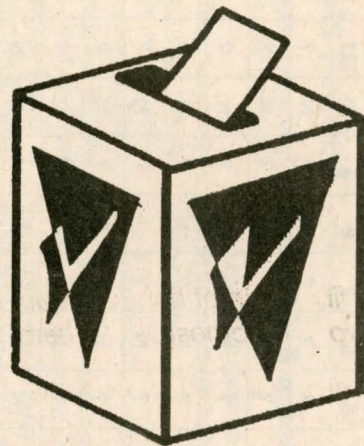
There are roughly two million lesbian, bisexual and gay voters in Canada. We hold the balance of power in many ridings. It's time we demand that politicians treat us with the respect that all Canadians deserve. We've been left off their agenda for too long.

Inside you'll find information on where the parties stand on sexual orientation issues, and tips on how you can make a difference in this campaign.

Get involved. Make your voice heard. Make the politicians earn your vote.

"It is not the actions of the bad people, but the silence of the good people that is the threat to our society."

Martin Luther King Jr.



The EGALE Election Project

**INFO EGALE
SPECIAL ELECTION ISSUE
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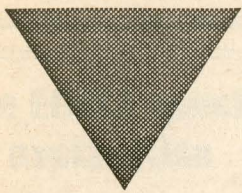
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GAY VOTE KEY IN 30 RIDINGS

Concentration in urban areas gives us clout

Lesbian and gay voters could determine federal election results in at least 30 ridings across the country, according to an informal EGALE analysis.

That's enough clout to significantly affect national results in a close election.

Lesbian and gay voters are a force to be reckoned with, and candidates are openly courting their votes.

While there are lesbians and gay men in all of Canada's 295 ridings, they tend to be concentrated in downtown urban areas. That concentration is particularly high in areas like Montreal's Village de l'Est, the Church-Wellesley neighbourhood in Toronto, Vancouver's West End, and Ottawa's Centretown.

To a greater or lesser degree, there are areas like this in every major Canadian city, in downtown areas and around universities.

That concentration gives us a lot of clout. If the community is mobilized, their votes are more than enough to swing a riding one way or another, especially in a close race.

Vancouver Centre: high-profile race

One of the most high-profile contests is in Prime Minister Kim Campbell's riding of Vancouver Centre, a riding with one of the highest concentrations of lesbian and gay voters in the country.

Campbell won the riding by less than 300 votes in the 1988 election. She subsequently infuriated many of her constituents when, as justice minister, she introduced a human rights bill that would restrict the rights of same-sex couples.

In this election, Campbell will be facing NDP candidate Betty Baxter, an Olympic athlete, businessperson, and a proud lesbian. Liberal candidate Dr. Hedy Fry has also been courting lesbian and gay voters.

Conservative MP David MacDonald also faces a tough fight in the downtown Toronto riding of Rosedale. He won the seat in 1988 by fewer than 100 votes.

Voters in the riding elected an openly gay city councillor, Kyle Rae, in the 1991 municipal election.

And sexual orientation issues played a big part in a 1993 provincial by-election here, when the candidates for the three major parties were a lesbian, a gay man, and a male heterosexual.

Courting gay voters

Federal Liberal candidate Bill Graham has been running ads in the gay magazine Xtra for months. NDP candidate Jack Layton, a former city councillor, is frequently seen at lesbian and gay community events.

A 1992 article in the Toronto Star estimated that there are more than 300,000 lesbians and gay men in Toronto.

In Ottawa Centre, NDP candidate Marion Dewar is challenging Liberal MP Mac Harb, who won the seat by fewer than 300 votes in 1988. A former Ottawa mayor, Dewar has actively supported the city's lesbian and gay community for years. She was Grand Marshal in this year's Lesbian and Gay Pride Parade.

And in the downtown Montreal riding of Laurier-Sainte-Marie, the candidates know that lesbian and gay support is vital to success. Candidates include Bloc Quebecois MP Gilles Duceppe, Liberal Robert Desbiens, Conservative Yvan Routhier, and New Democrat Alain Gravel.

A 1988 article in La Presse estimated that lesbians and gay men account for as many as 20,000 of the riding's 56,000 voters.

Similar scenarios are being played out across the country, in Halifax, Moncton, Quebec City, Hull, Kingston, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Edmonton, Calgary and Victoria.

EGALE spoke to community activists across the country, and to officials from

the political parties, and concluded that at least 30 ridings have a significant concentration of lesbian and gay voters.

Dinosaurs an embarrassment

"We're long past the days when it was considered a big risk for politicians to support lesbian and gay rights," says EGALE President Denis LeBlanc. "In the 90s, the reverse is true: politicians who oppose equality for lesbians and gays are seen as dinosaurs, and as embarrassments to their parties."

LeBlanc points to the recent U.S. election as evidence of the growing political influence of lesbian and gay voters. Studies show that many gay Republicans voted for Democrat Bill Clinton, and helped put him in the White House. Gay-bashing rhetoric by Republican politicians clearly hurt their campaign.

"Lesbian, bisexual and gay voters are much less timid than in the past," LeBlanc says. "We are demanding to know where politicians stand on the issues, and why so little progress has been made on human rights at the federal level. Most of all, we want to know what politicians will actually do if elected to represent our communities."

DINOSAURS SPOTTED ON PARLIAMENT HILL

Outdated ideas face extinction

If you thought Jurassic Park was the only place to find living, breathing dinosaurs, think again. A number of the dangerous beasts have been spotted on Parliament Hill.

"In political terms, a dinosaur is someone whose ideas are so outdated that they face extinction," says EGALE President Denis LeBlanc. "They exist in a kind of time warp that is totally out of touch with the realities of the 1990s."

Dinosaurs don't let facts get in the way. In the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary, they persist in promoting the old myths -- that homosexuality is a "lifestyle choice," that it hurts "family values," that it can be "cured", that queers are to blame for pedophilia, AIDS, and a long list of society's woes.

The vast majority of Parliament Hill dinosaurs are Conservatives, but the species has been observed in almost every party. Recent sightings include:

- Conservative MP Ross Belsher (Fraser Valley West, British Columbia), who maintains that "sexual variations beyond heterosexuality are unnatural and perverse." He cites Biblical passages to back up this claim. Belsher even went so far as to call Prime Minister Mulroney in 1987 to tell him he would never support legislation to prevent discrimination based on sexual orientation. He later sent a newsletter (at taxpayers' expense) to constituents explaining how homosexual rights undermine the traditional family.
- Conservative Darryl Gray (Bonaventure-Iles-de-la-Madeleine) considers homosexuality "a deviant factor of our society."
- Conservative anti-abortion crusader John Reimer (Kitchener) has been one of the most outspoken opponents of lesbian and gay rights on Parliament Hill.
- Other Tory MPs who have stated their opposition to an equal rights amendment include Energy Minister Barbara Sparrow (Calgary Southwest), Don Blenkarn (Mississauga South), and Ken James (Sarnia-Lambton).
- Al Johnson (Calgary North), chair of the Tory "family cau-

cus", has publicly argued against "special rights" for lesbians and gays.

- Reform Party MP Deborah Gray (Beaver River) has also indicated her opposition to an equal rights amendment.
- New Democrat Les Benjamin (Regina Lumsden) replied to EGALE's questionnaire with snide comments that make it clear he's not a keen supporter of his party's positions on lesbigay issues. We were not displeased to learn that Benjamin is retiring from politics.
- Finally, there's Liberal MP and black sheep Tom Wappell (Scarborough West), who once told a gay constituent that homosexuality is a "lifestyle choice which is not practiced or condoned by the vast majority of Canadians [and] is not in accordance with the biology and physiology of the human body."

With support from pro-life groups, Wappell ran for the Liberal leadership, and later tried to take over the party's national executive.

He recommended keeping refugees in unused military bases, and rejecting all refugees testing positive for HIV. In a memo to MPs, he linked homosexuality to pedophilia, bestiality and necrophilia.

EGALE believes that election time is dinosaur-hunting time. We may not be able to defeat homophobic MPs in the most conservative ridings, but we can expose them for what they are.

If you're interested in obtaining more information on the views of these and other dinosaurs, you can call or write to EGALE in Ottawa. Often the dinosaurs' own words are the best ammunition to use against them.

CHALLENGING THE 1% MYTH

U.S. survey misinterpreted, used as anti-gay propaganda

One of the most common and harmful myths about lesbians and gays is that there aren't very many of us.

Unfortunately, widespread misinterpretation of a U.S. research study earlier this year has helped to reinforce this myth.

Results from the National Survey of Men were reported in the March/April issue of *Family Planning Perspectives*. The survey was conducted two years ago with funding from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. Its purpose was to examine sexual behaviour and condom use among heterosexual males.

In face-to-face interviews, only 2.3 per cent of the men surveyed acknowledged "any same-gender sexual activity." Only one per cent acknowledged "exclusively homosexual activity."

This resulted in newspaper headlines claiming that gays make up only one or two per cent of the population.

But it's a big mistake to assume the survey results mean only one or two per cent of the U.S. population is gay.

"That's not what we said," says Koray Tanfer, a senior research scientist who worked on the study. "We said 2.3 per cent of men in these age groups admitted to having had" same-sex sexual activity "during the last ten years."

"This was not done to count the number of gays in the United States. It was specifically

done to look at risky behaviour among *heterosexuals*. If we had wanted to count gays, we would have done a totally different study."

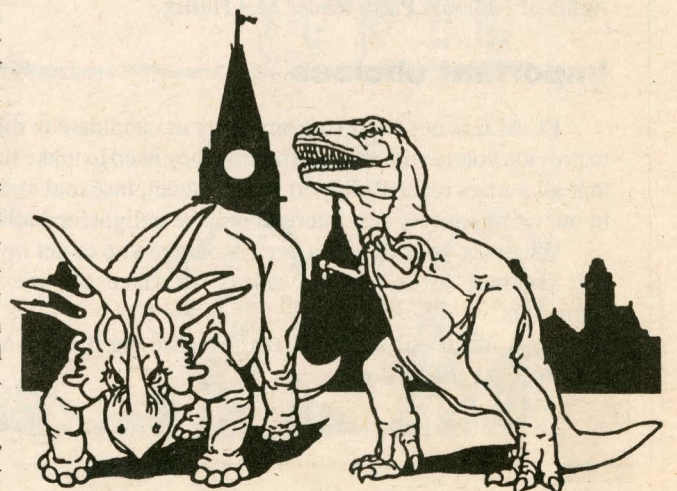
According to Tanfer, "It's common wisdom that people would tend to conceal their true identity rather than exaggerate it, so this would be an undercount rather than an overcount."

The written report of the survey acknowledged that a number of the research methods used may have contributed to the low rate of same-gender sexual activity.

Since respected sex researcher Alfred Kinsey released a comprehensive study of male sexual behaviour in 1948, many experts have believed that homosexuals make up roughly ten per cent of the population. The Kinsey Institute has subsequently repeated the study and confirmed the results.

"Although it has no basis in fact, the 1% myth has been repeatedly used in an attempt to diminish our community," says EGALE board member Jim Oldham. "Sloppy reporting by journalists has allowed right-wing opponents of lesbian, bisexual and gay rights to use this misinformation in their propaganda campaigns. It's important that our community challenge anyone who tries to use these inaccurate statistics against us."

Much of the information in this article appeared originally in The Washington Blade, April 23, 1993.



EDITORIAL

What have you done for me lately?

EGALE reviews the parties' records on lesbigay rights

EGALE believes that most politicians have given little serious thought to most sexual orientation issues. We also believe that lesbians, bisexuals and gay men -- and indeed, all Canadians -- have a right to know where the parties stand on these issues.

This why we sent a detailed questionnaire on sexual orientation issues to all Members of Parliament earlier this year. We believe the results will be of considerable interest to lesbian and gay voters as they cast their ballots this fall.

As we review the policies of the political parties, let us also remember that, in politics, past actions are usually the best indicator of future behaviour.

Conservative record appalling

We believe the federal Conservatives' record on sexual orientation issues over the past decade has been appalling. The Mulroney government has made no progress whatsoever on lesbian and gay rights beyond what was required by court rulings. In fact, the Tories have repeatedly spent our tax dollars *opposing* our rights in court.

Kim Campbell's proposed amendments to the Canadian Human Rights Act (Bill C-108) would restrict the rights of same-sex couples. There can be little doubt that Campbell feels obliged to appease right-wing caucus colleagues who have considerable influence in the Conservative party.

Conservative MPs say they support "Canada's concept of the family," a concept that apparently excludes us. In a pluralistic country like Canada, it is ludicrous to suggest there is only one acceptable family model.

Campbell calls her bill a "compromise." We believe there can be no compromise when it comes to the rights of our families.

Can you say gay, Jean?

The Liberal position on lesbian and gay rights is only slightly more encouraging. It is vague and evasive, full of noble-sounding words, but short on solid commitments. Why, for example, have the Liberals refused to take a stand on the marital status definition in Bill C-108? It seems clear that the Liberal caucus is divided, and Opposition Leader Jean Chrétien has failed to show the leadership needed to develop a consensus on this issue.

Chrétien notes in his questionnaire response that the Trudeau government decriminalized homosexuality and introduced the Charter of Rights. These were major milestones in the struggle for lesbian and gay rights in Canada.

But as the song says, what have you done for me lately?

We are particularly disturbed that Chrétien has never spoken publicly on sexual orientation issues since becoming leader. As far as we know, he has never said the words *lesbian* and *gay* in public.

We hope this election provides an opportunity for the Liberal leader to expand his vocabulary.

Thanks Audrey

In sharp contrast to the other major parties, the NDP has responded with a clear YES to all of EGALE's questions on sexual orientation issues. For that, the New Democrats must be commended.

In particular, we salute gay MP Svend Robinson, who has been an articulate and courageous advocate for our community.

We are also convinced of Audrey McLaughlin's sincere commitment to lesbian and gay rights. We encourage her to speak out on these issues during this election.

Of course the difficulty in assessing the NDP is that they have never formed a federal government. They have never had to deliver on their promises. Voters might want to consider the records of NDP governments in British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Ontario as some indication of the party's commitment to our community.

New kids on the block/bloc

Bloc Quebecois leader Lucien Bouchard asked MP Gilles Duceppe to respond to the EGALE questionnaire. Duceppe answered YES to 14 out of 17 questions. If this represents official Bloc policy, we're impressed.

Reform Party leader Preston Manning declined to complete our questionnaire. However, he has publicly stated his view that "homosexuality is destructive to the individual, and in the long run, society." We think that says it all.

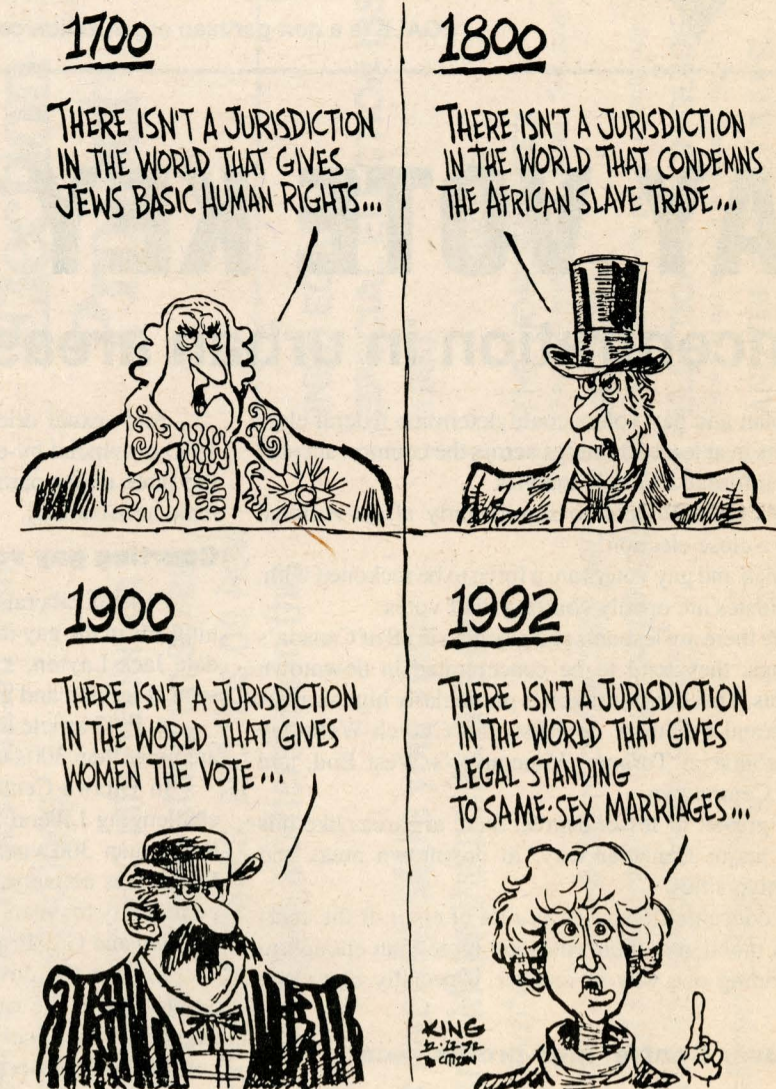
Finally, we were delighted to learn of the solid commitment to lesbian and gay rights of National Party leader Mel Hurtig.

Important choices

EGALE is not endorsing any party or candidate in this election. Instead we aim to provide voters with the information they need to make their own choices. We know that all parties receive support from lesbian, bisexual and gay voters. We think it is in our community's best interests to have enlightened allies in all the parties.

Whatever your decision, we encourage you to get involved in this election. We will continue to be ignored unless we make our presence felt throughout this campaign.

Let's make our voices heard, because we'll be living with the results of this election for years to come.



Courtesy: Alan King, The Ottawa Citizen

TIME TO GO NATIONAL

EGALE supports Canadian lesbigay group

Did you ever wonder why just about every community in Canada is represented by a national organization *except* ours?

EGALE has long supported the view that Canadian queers need a national group to represent their interests. EGALE members were involved in putting this issue on the table at the Vancouver OUTRIGHTS conference in October 1992. We believe it's time for our communities to get moving on this initiative.

Canada's lesbian, gay and bisexual communities urgently need a unified voice on national issues. Last year, for example, while a number of queer groups expressed their views on constitutional reform, there was no single voice speaking for our communities and no forum for arriving at a consensus position.

It is no longer good enough to await random initiatives by local groups and individuals.

The results of the EGALE questionnaire make it painfully obvious that most politicians are woefully ignorant about the issues that concern our communities.

To continue with the status quo means we will continue to be ignored.

An agenda for change

Our communities need to develop an agenda for change which reflects our desire to eradicate homophobia. Acting in solidarity across Canada would ensure that our issues are taken more seriously by those in a position to effect change.

There is clearly a need for better communication among activists and groups in all parts of the country. A national group could serve as a centre for information-sharing, and as a focal point for Canada-wide political action. Such a group might establish an information clearing house and electronic communication networks, for example.

Ideally EGALE would like to see a national organization of groups, coalitions and

individuals based on the inclusive models of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, or the Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights in Ontario.

We believe its primary decision-making body should be a national conference of members every two years that would elect a representative board of directors. It would eventually have a full-time president, full-time staff, and an office in Ottawa.

Challenges to overcome

We are well aware that there are challenges to overcome in establishing such an organization in a country of great regional and linguistic diversity. But we are confident in our communities' ability to address these challenges. Working together, we can be more

than the sum of our parts.

As an Ottawa-based community group focusing primarily on federal issues, EGALE is doing its best to distribute information and to keep important federal issues alive. But we have neither the resources nor the mandate to act as a national group.

The next OUTRIGHTS conference will hopefully be held in 1994. EGALE believes this could be the ideal opportunity to launch a national group. Please contact EGALE if you are interested in supporting this endeavour. We'll be glad to put you in touch with regional contact persons who are coordinating efforts to establish a national lesbigay group in Canada.

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Questions for candidates

Use questions from the EGALÉ questionnaire, or the questions listed here to quiz candidates. Try to make your questions as specific as possible, and insist on specific answers.

- Did you respond to the EGALÉ questionnaire? If not, why not?
- Have you ever spoken in public on sexual orientation issues? If not, why not?
- What have you done/will you do to represent the interests of lesbian and gay constituents?
- Do you believe that same-sex couples should have the same legal status as heterosexual couples?
- Do you think it's important to have openly lesbian and gay MPs in the House of Commons?

Conservatives:

- Why has your government constantly opposed lesbian and gay rights cases in court?
- Why did it take seven years for your government to introduce a sexual orientation amendment to the Canadian Human Rights Act?
- Why did your government wait so long to develop a federal AIDS funding program?
- Why does your government allow Canada Customs to harass lesbian and gay bookstores?

Liberals:

- Why has your party refused to take a stand on the marital status definition in Kim Campbell's human rights bill?
- Why doesn't your leader speak out on sexual orientation issues?
- Will you end harassment of lesbian and gay bookstores by Canada Customs?
- Why did your party support a child pornography bill that was widely condemned by civil libertarians and lawyers as a threat to freedom of expression?

New Democrats:

- Why did your party support a child pornography bill that was widely condemned by civil libertarians and lawyers as a threat to freedom of expression?

ELECTION ACTION GUIDE: THE INDIVIDUAL VOTER

Your power — your vote

You *do* make a difference and exercise enormous power during an election. Politicians respond to constituents at election time because of the possible reward, your vote.

Your vote decides who will represent you in Ottawa for the next four or five years. You are the one who decides who will get the job.

Don't diminish your individual importance in this process. To a candidate, each vote is as important as the next, and most candidates will work very hard to get yours.

Election time is when you have real power -- the power to vote, to influence how your friends vote, and to influence the political agendas of candidates and parties.

Candidates will have an army of volunteers swarming your neighbourhood, canvassers knocking on your door, phoning you, trying to influence how you will vote. This is your chance to be heard.

As a lesbian, gay man or bisexual, you are part of a major voting block that could determine the outcome of the election, both in your riding and nationally. Together, our

community of about two million voters can make a real difference.

That's why it's important for you to get active, participate in the process and find out as much as you can about what the candidates and the parties will do after they get elected on the issues you care about.

Action checklist

- Make sure you vote: Call any candidate's office or the returning office in your riding to make sure you're on the voters list.
- Engage canvassers or candidates at the door: We encourage you to assert your sexual orientation at the door to canvassers or to the candidates who come knocking. Ask for the candidate's views on sexual orientation issues. If not immediately available, ask for someone to call you back or ask for a written response. Don't let them know how you're going to vote until you get the answers. Make them work to get your vote!
- Attend candidates meeting: Find out about candidates meetings from your local newspaper or by calling

any candidate's office. Hearing the candidate personally is one of the best ways to get the information you need. Take the time to ask a question -- prepare ahead by writing it down.

- Share the information you have with friends, family and colleagues: And don't assume that only queers care about sexual orientation issues.
- Get involved in a candidate's campaign: Once you've made your choice, volunteer to work for that candidate, or take a sign. Again, we encourage you to assert your sexual orientation. Make it clear to the candidate and other volunteers that they have your support because of the candidate's or party's position on sexual orientation issues.
- Get involved in your local gay community's election efforts: Many lesbian groups will need extra hands during the election campaign to ensure information gets out to the community. Call EGALÉ at 1-613-230-1043 if you're unsure how to reach a local group. Leave a message and an evening telephone number on our answering machine and we'll get back to you.

Queer clout in the USA

South of the border, our American cousins are flexing their muscles. Are Canadian politicians watching?

Queer rights activists in this country often like to make comparisons between our situation in Canada and that of our queer cousins south of the border. Considering the significant differences in our countries' political systems, that may be like comparing apples and oranges.

In many respects, lesbian rights in the United States lag far behind the rights we enjoy in Canada. But when we look at the lesbian communities' involvement in the U.S. political arena, we see that they have remarkable visibility and clout. We can learn from their successes in this area.

Assuming that about ten percent of the American population is queer, the U.S. may have more queers than Canada has people. Since the police raid on New York's

have been the largest political demonstration ever in the U.S. capital.

High visibility

U.S. lesbians and gays are far more visible in public life than ever before. At the national level, Barney Frank and Gerry Studds, Democratic congressmen of Massachusetts, are openly gay, as are a dozen elected officials in state legislatures. At the local level, a growing number of gay municipal councillors and mayors have been elected in recent years. In terms of federal officials, President Clinton appointed lesbian politician Roberta Achtenberg as an assistant secretary at the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The appointment was significant because of its seniority, requiring U.S. Senate confirmation.

To date there is no federal legislation explicitly targeted at protecting the rights of gays and lesbians. Eight states, however, have enacted gay rights laws, and numerous municipalities have passed similar ordinances.

The most recent state, Minnesota, added sexual orientation to the categories protected from discrimination and explicitly included bisexuals and transsexuals in its coverage. In Hawaii, which has a similar law, the state supreme court ruled recently that it was unconstitutional to prohibit gay marriages.

The challenge of supporting lesbian issues has founded traditional party politics. The Democrats have many conservatives, especially from the South. Democratic Senator Sam Nunn has been one of the most powerful opponents of President Clinton's plan to lift the military ban. The Republicans, home to the religious right, also include politicians with a strong libertarian vein, best exemplified by the gay-friendly Governor of Massachusetts, William Weld.

A quiet revolution

What these and all politicians are learning is that a quiet revolution has taken place in the United States that has paralleled the highly visible radicalism of marches and kiss-ins.

Studies have shown that tolerance for lesbians and gays increases markedly in response to the emergence of greater matter-of-fact openness among gay men and lesbians in their personal and professional lives.

Sexual orientation issues have moved to the forefront in American political debate. Have Canadian politicians been watching and learning from the American experience? We'll see soon enough.

Bill Clinton embraced the gay community, and in return, received up to 80 percent of the gay vote and millions of dollars in financial contributions.

Stonewall bar in 1969, American lesbians, bisexuals and gay men have galvanized themselves to work for recognition at every level in society.

And yet, almost 25 years after Stonewall, homosexual acts remain illegal in twenty-three states, in some cases carrying prison sentences of five to twenty years. (Canada decriminalized homosexual sex in 1969.) Gay-bashing incidents are on the rise, and the religious right has become increasingly vicious in its condemnation of "the homosexual lifestyle."

Gay-bashing backfired

The 1992 presidential election demonstrated beyond a doubt that gay-bashing rhetoric simply doesn't work anymore. The Republicans toned down their rhetoric after many Americans indicated their disgust with speeches made at the Republican National Convention. Democrat Bill Clinton embraced the gay community, and in return, he received up to 80 percent of the gay vote, and millions of dollars in financial contributions.

Our American cousins are well-organized at the political level, with several active national organizations. They need to be, for their opponents on the right are extraordinarily powerful.

The lesbian and gay delegation at last year's Democratic National Convention was larger than the delegations of most states. When Colorado voters repealed gay rights laws in a referendum last year, the lesbian community organized a boycott that has cost the state more than \$35 million in lost convention business.

A million lesbians, bisexuals, gay men and their supporters marched on Washington in April, in what may

ELECTION ACTION GUIDE: LESBIGAY GROUPS

Our voices count!

Our lesbian communities can have a powerful impact on the outcome of the election right across Canada, if we are well-informed and mobilized to act.

In any given town or city, community groups can take action in many ways to ensure that our voice is heard loud and clear.

- Prepare your election strategy: Ensure your group discusses its involvement in the election to determine a strategy for your community. Consider the priority issues you want to raise and whether you want to endorse or oppose particular candidates.
- Form an election action coalition: In cities with more than one lesbian group, you should initiate discussions as soon as possible with the other groups to forge an election action coalition. This will ensure our efforts are maximized in each community without duplication of effort. And don't overlook AIDS groups and other equality-seeking organizations.
- Organize a candidates meeting: Invite all the candidates to your own community debate. Start planning as soon as possible, and make sure to advertise. Issue a press release and follow up by telephone with local media. Have your own recorder at the meeting and publicize the results as widely as possible.
- Attend candidates meetings and ask questions: Attend as many meetings

as possible, in as many ridings as you can. Always assert your sexual orientation.

- Keep members of your group informed: Make sure they have information on the issues and campaign events. Make them feel a part of the process.
- Conduct a survey of candidates: Write to all the candidates with your own questions, or use questions from the EGALÉ questionnaire. Keep it brief, and send it as early as possible. Let the candidates know your deadline, follow up with a phone call, then publicize the results with special letters, newsletters, or a press release. (While you're at it, send EGALÉ a copy for our records.)
- Distribute this InfoEGALÉ: You can insert this InfoEGALÉ in your own newspaper or newsletter, send a copy to members, and distribute it at the various places where queers congregate in your community.

You can order more copies by calling EGALÉ at 1-613-230-1043, and leaving your order on our answering machine. (Please leave your address and an evening telephone number.) We can provide you with as many copies as you need, at cost. This issue of InfoEGALÉ is not copyrighted -- we encourage you to reproduce any article. We ask only that you credit EGALÉ.

THE CANADIAN HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

Seven years later, we're still waiting

When EGALE was founded in 1985, our primary objective was to push for an amendment to the Canadian Human Rights Act to add sexual orientation as a prohibited ground of discrimination.

We're still waiting.

The three main parties have officially supported such an amendment since 1985 when the amendment was recommended by the Parliamentary Committee on Equality Rights.

In 1986 then justice minister John Crosbie promised the government would introduce the amendment.

After years of waiting for the government to deliver on the promise, gay activists Graham Haig and Joshua Birch took the government to court. In August 1992, an Ontario Court of Appeal ruling (Haig versus Canada) said that the Act *must* prohibit discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in order to comply with the Canadian Charter of Rights. The ruling effectively amended the Act, and the Canadian Human Rights Act has subsequently accepted sexual orientation complaints.

In December 1992, then justice minister Kim Campbell introduced Bill C-108, An Act to Amend the Canadian Human Rights Act. As required by the Haig ruling, the bill includes an amendment to prohibit discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation. However, in an attempt to appease right-wing Conservative backbenchers, Campbell's bill also restricts the rights of same-sex couples by defining "marital status" as limited to partners "of the opposite sex." In this sense, the bill is clearly a backwards step from the Haig ruling.

Contrary to the impression sometimes given in the media, the marital status definition has nothing to do with the right to marry, which is regulated by federal marriage law. The definition would, however, continue to allow discrimination against lesbian and gay couples.

This restrictive definition of marital status has previously been found unconstitutional in September 1992 by an Ontario human rights tribunal, in the Leshner case. This raises the distinct possibility that the Bill C-108 amendment, if passed, would also be found unconstitutional in a court challenge.

A number of other equality-seeking groups have also objected to provisions of Bill C-108 that would adversely affect groups such as women and persons with disabilities.

In any case, Bill C-108 never progressed beyond first reading in the House of Commons, and it will die on the order paper at the end of this Parliament.

More than seven years after the government's promise to act, lesbians, bisexuals and gay men are still waiting for this crucial human rights amendment to be passed by Parliament.

The EGALE questionnaire asked

Do you support adding sexual orientation to the list of prohibited grounds of discrimination in the Canadian Human Rights Act?

Conservatives: Yes

Liberals: Yes

New Democrats: Yes

Do you agree that the proposed definition of marital status in Bill C-108 unfairly discriminates against same-sex couples?

Conservatives: No.

"The definition of marital status in Bill C-108 is consistent with previous court decisions."

Kim Campbell: "It was necessary to make some compromises to achieve what we did with Bill C-108."

Liberals: ?

"The Liberal caucus is studying the legislation."

New Democrats: Yes.

"The NDP is opposing Bill C-108 and the definition of marital status that excludes same-sex couples."

"The Government will take whatever measures are necessary to ensure that sexual orientation is a prohibited ground of discrimination in relation to all areas of federal jurisdiction."

John Crosbie, Minister of Justice
March 1986

"Governments usually amend human rights laws to inch rights forward, not to cut them back. But that's what [Bill C-108] does."

Shelagh Day, Vice-President
National Action Committee on the Status of Women
February 1993

RELATIONSHIP RECOGNITION

We're families too!

It must be obvious to any reasonably intelligent person that being in same-sex relationships is by *definition* a fundamental part of being gay. Human rights laws that fail to recognize this do not provide true equality.

To date, same-sex couples have not been permitted to marry in Canada. While same-sex marriages are not explicitly prohibited in federal legislation, the federal Justice Department has opposed same-sex marriages in court.

EGALE has supported a court challenge initiated by Pierre Beaulne and Todd Layland, two gay men whose application for a marriage license was refused.

A number of foreign countries and municipalities have enacted or are considering legislation to recognize same-sex relationships.

Many private and public sector employers in Canada (including many municipal governments and the governments of Ontario and New Brunswick) have extended employee benefits to the same-sex partners of their employees. This has resulted in little or no increased costs to employers.

In the September 1992 Leshner decision, an Ontario human rights tribunal ruled that the Ontario government must extend benefits to the same-sex partners of its employees.

Many lesbians, bisexuals and gay men believe that governments should provide benefits to *individuals* based on criteria other than family status. But in the absence of a fundamental restructuring of government benefits, same-sex couples must have equal access to the same benefits provided to heterosexual couples. It is clearly unfair to expect us to subsidize government programs that we cannot participate in.

The EGALE questionnaire asked

Do you believe the federal government should extend employee benefits to the same-sex partners of federal employees?

Conservatives: ?

"...the federal government's legal obligations in the extension of federal employee benefits has not yet been comprehensively considered by the courts."

"It is surely in the interest of the state to foster all family relationships, be they heterosexual or same-sex relationships"

Madame Justice Susan Greer
minority ruling in the Beaulne and Layland case
March 1992

Liberals: ?

"The Liberal caucus will be studying the New Brunswick government's recently announced policy in regard to spousal benefits for same-sex couples..."

New Democrats: Yes

Do you support a review of federal legislation with the aim of allowing lesbian and gay couples to share the same benefits and responsibilities as heterosexuals?

Conservatives: ?

"The Department of Justice has already begun a review of federal legislation and policies that make distinctions on the basis of marriage and family relationships. The issue of benefits for gay and lesbian partners will be considered as part of this review."

Liberals: ?

"A Liberal government would review all current federal legislation to ensure that it reflects the diversity of Canadian society."

New Democrats: Yes

Do you support changes to federal marriage law to recognize same-sex marriages?

Conservatives: ?

"As this issue is currently before the courts, it is inappropriate to comment, other than to say that federal legislation does not prohibit same-sex marriages."

Liberals: ?

"It does not appear that any provincial government in Canada officially supports marriages between people of the same sex. At the federal level, the concept of legally-sanctioned same-sex marriages has not been an issue until recently. For this reason, the issue [has not been] debated by the Liberal Party..."

New Democrats: Yes

Support Egan and Nesbit

The Supreme Court of Canada will finally be forced to rule on the rights of same-sex couples in the Egan and Nesbit case.

Jim Egan and John Nesbit, a British Columbia couple who have been together for over 40 years, were denied a spousal pension. Their Charter challenge may have profound implications for all same-sex couples in Canada.

Please support this important case. Cheques made out to *Arvay Finlay in trust* (re Egan and Nesbit) can be sent to:

Arvay Finlay, Barristers and Solicitors
200-754 Broughton Street, Victoria, B.C., V8W 1E1

IMMIGRATION

Government ignores sexual orientation issues

Although family reunification has been one of the cornerstones of Canadian immigration policy, the federal government has repeatedly refused to allow the immigration of the same-sex partners of Canadian citizens.

Australia, Denmark, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway and Sweden all permit same-sex spousal immigration.

Canada also allows the immigration of refugees who have a "well-founded fear of persecution" in their country of origin. In 1992, the Immigration and Refugee Board granted asylum to several gay refugees who faced persecution on the basis of sexual orientation in Argentina and Russia. However, other similar applications have been rejected.

Legislation which recently overhauled the Immigration Act (Bill C-86) contained no reference to sexual orientation issues.

The EGALE questionnaire asked

Do you support amendments to the Immigration Act to allow the immigration of same-sex partners of Canadian citizens?

Conservatives: No

The Conservatives support "Canada's concept of the family....There are no plans to change the Act at this time."

Kim Campbell: "I have not considered the matter fully, and I would like to hear all of the arguments for and against."

Liberals: ?

"We would not favour any legislation that discriminates on the basis of sexual orientation."

New Democrats: Yes

Svend Robinson: "I have actively pressured the Minister of Immigration to make these changes to Departmental regulations."

Do you believe Canada should grant asylum to refugees with a well-founded fear of persecution on the basis of sexual orientation?

Conservatives: ?

"There is no need to change our regulations to include sexual orientation because under our refugee determination system, *all* persons are entitled to assert a claim to Canada's protection."

Liberals: ?

"The Liberal Party is firmly committed to banning discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation."

New Democrats: Yes

COURT CHALLENGES PROGRAM

Government tips the scales of justice

So you thought the Court Challenges Program was dead, finished, kaput? It was killed by the federal Conservatives last year, n'est-ce pas? Well, not quite. EGALE is still administering four legal research projects which continue lesbian efforts to seek equality through court action.

The Court Challenges Program was originally created in 1978 to address concerns about minority linguistic rights. It was expanded in 1985 to develop the new equality rights guarantees of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Equality-seeking groups successfully lobbied for funding to support test cases to clarify these constitutional rights.

The government agreed that constitutional rights aren't of much value if people don't have access to them. Establishing these rights in court is extremely expensive, far beyond the reach of most ordinary Canadians.

Over the years, the program supported a number of important court actions affecting the rights of lesbian and gay Canadians. These included the Veysey case, the Egan-Nesbit case currently before the Supreme Court of Canada, the Mossop case, and the landmark Haig-Birch case, where the court ruled that the Canadian Human Rights Act "be interpreted, applied and administered as though it contained sexual orientation as a prohibited ground of discrimination."

Despite these important precedent-setting cases -- or perhaps because of them -- the federal government closed the doors to the Court Challenges Program on September 30, 1992. The cancellation came without warning, half-way through a five year extension of the program.

There was harsh and widespread criticism for the government's decision, from numerous human rights groups, several provincial governments, the Canadian Bar Association, a former

Supreme Court judge, and the House of Commons Standing Committee on Human Rights, which unanimously recommended the reinstatement of the program.

As Official Languages Commissioner Dr. Victor Goldbloom said, "A noble, generous and democratic experiment has been cut short before its time."

The Conservatives said they cancelled the program as part of their spending cutbacks, but they neglected to mention that they have dramatically increased the amount of taxpayers' money they use to fight *against* human rights cases in court. The Department of Justice has routinely appealed sexual orientation cases, and spared no expense to fight against the rights of lesbian Canadians. Without the Court Challenges Program, our community's ability to fight back is severely restricted.

The EGALE questionnaire asked

Do you support the reinstatement of the Court Challenges Program?

Conservatives: No

"Our decision to cancel the Court Challenges Program was based on the need to cut spending and the deficit...it was never intended to give perpetual resources to lobby groups."

Liberals: Yes

"A Liberal government would restore the Court Challenges Program to help give all Canadians access to the courts."

New Democrats: Yes

"The NDP has consistently called for the reinstatement of the Court Challenges Program."

Breast cancer: high risk for lesbians

According to a recent study by the U.S. National Cancer Institute, one in three lesbians is likely to develop breast cancer in her lifetime -- a rate approximately three times higher than that of the general female population. This is apparently due to a number of factors, such as the low rate of pregnancy among lesbians.

A June 1992 report by the House of Commons Health Committee described breast cancer as a problem "of near epidemic proportion."

The EGALE questionnaire asked

Would you support federally-funded research and public education programs to address the problem of breast cancer among lesbians?

Conservatives: ?

"Our initiatives in this area are intended to help *all* women."

Liberals: ?

"Liberals have consistently pointed out in the House of Commons that breast cancer must be a national priority."

New Democrats: Yes

ACCESS TO REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGIES

Lesbians often rejected by fertility clinics

Many lesbians, bisexuals and gay men are parents, and many others want to be.

As EGALE testified to the Royal Commission on New Reproductive Technologies, we want the same access as heterosexuals to technologies such as artificial insemination and in-vitro fertilization.

A study of Canadian fertility clinics released by the Royal Commission in April reported that, "in over half the [fertility programs], being a lesbian or a woman without a partner was a probable or possible cause for disqualification."

Access to reproductive technologies is particularly important for our community as we have often been denied the right to adopt children.

The EGALE questionnaire asked

Do you support health system policies that would provide lesbians and gay men with the same access to reproductive technologies as heterosexuals?

Conservatives: ?

"[This matter] is currently not covered under federal law. The Royal Commission on Reproductive Technologies is looking into this and other related issues."

Liberals: ?

"Liberals are awaiting the final report of the Royal Commission - due in mid-July - in order to study the recommendations addressing this matter."

New Democrats: Yes

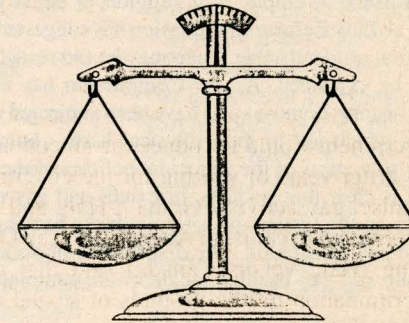
EGALE legal research projects

Prior to the cancellation of the Court Challenges Program, EGALE received funding approval for four legal research projects to examine:

- the definition of identifiable group in the Criminal Code, (see Hate hurts, page 6);
- Criminal Code provisions concerning the use of the defence of provocation ("he came on to me, that's why I had to kill/beat/torture, etc.");
- access to health services;
- the Immigration Act;

Following a competitive selection process, EGALE selected four lawyers from across the country to research the legal parameters of cases involving these four important issues. We expect the projects will be completed by fall 1993.

We believe that this research will be of great value to our community in future court challenges. EGALE hopes to raise sufficient funds to ensure that the research is distributed and applied in the most effective manner. Contact EGALE in Ottawa if you are interested in learning more about these projects.



AIDS: the crisis continues

In 1990, eight years after the first case of AIDS was reported in Canada, the federal government announced a federal AIDS funding program. The government contributed \$37.5 million annually for three years, until the expiry of the program on March 31, 1993.

In November 1992, national health organizations recommended to then health minister Benoit Bouchard that a minimum of \$55.35 million in federal funding is required to adequately address Canada's AIDS/HIV epidemic. This proposal was unanimously endorsed by the all-party Parliamentary Ad Hoc Committee on AIDS.

Bouchard announced in March 1993 that the government would spend only \$42.2 million a year on AIDS for the next five years.

Almost 5,000 people have died of AIDS in Canada, and an estimated 30,000 Canadians are now living with the HIV infection.

The EGALE questionnaire asked

Do you agree that federal AIDS funding should be increased to \$55.35 million a year?

Conservatives: No

"We increased funding....at a time when we must cut back spending in virtually all areas."

Liberals: ?

"Liberal health critic, Dr. Rey Pagtakhan, in questioning the Minister of Health in the House of Commons, advocated...a firm commitment of \$55 million a year."

New Democrats: Yes

"The NDP supported the call of AIDS organizations for this level of funding."

AIDS/HIV is "the greatest communicable disease challenge to face public health in the second half of the 20th century."

Dr. Ian Gemmill, Canadian Public Health Association
quoted in *Confronting a Crisis: The Report of the Parliamentary Ad Hoc Committee on AIDS*
June 1990

"It is a great pity that there is an overfixation on AIDS, which is perhaps one of the least of the concerns in our society right now with respect to infectious or contagious diseases..."

Kim Campbell
Vancouver Sun, March 19, 1993

Support Simon Thwaites

In what may be one of its most heartless moves yet, the federal government has appealed a human rights ruling against Simon Thwaites, a Halifax man who was fired by the Canadian Forces because he is HIV positive.

The Canadian Human Rights Commission agreed that the Canadian Forces discriminated on the basis of disability, and awarded a cash settlement to Thwaites. But now Thwaites can't get the cash until the appeal is resolved. He has declared personal bankruptcy, and his lawyer says she cannot afford to pursue his case.

Kim Campbell was Minister of Defence when the case was heard.

You can help by asking candidates if their party would drop the appeal against Thwaites if elected. You can also call or write to your Member of Parliament, or Prime Minister Campbell, at the following address:

House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6



HATE HURTS

Hate crime amendments needed

With the rise of neo-Nazi and other right-wing groups in Canada, measures to fight hate crime are of increasing concern.

Under the Criminal Code it is an offence to promote hatred or genocide against an identifiable group. "Identifiable group" is defined as "any section of the public distinguished by colour, race, religion, or ethnic origin."

The Law Reform Commission has suggested that this definition of identifiable group may be too restrictive, and might be expanded. As the Commission has noted, "in recent history, homosexuals have been subjected to hateful attacks which led to their physical harm....homosexuals were also victims of the genocidal policies of the Nazis."

It is clear that lesbians, bisexuals and gay men continue to be the victims of hateful attacks based solely on their sexual orientation. The distribution of anti-gay hate literature and gay-bashing incidents are common in Canada.

Neo-Nazi skinheads have been charged with the murder of two Montreal gay men in December 1992. At least thirteen gay men have been murdered in Montreal since 1989.

The EGALE questionnaire asked

Do you support amendments to the Criminal Code to prohibit hate crimes based on sexual orientation?

Conservatives: No

"Broadening the type of speech caught by the hate propaganda provisions of the Criminal Code would make them vulnerable to attack under the Charter as an unjustifiable infringement of freedom of speech."

Liberals: Yes

"The Liberal Party is opposed to hate crimes of any kind and would most definitely take steps to ensure that just as discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is outlawed, so too would hate crimes based on sexual orientation be outlawed."

New Democrats: Yes

PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT

Canada lags behind

Canadian political parties say they are trying to reflect the diversity of the Canadian population, but they usually overlook the lesbian and gay community. Most of the parties have failed to encourage the participation of openly gay men and lesbians in public life.

There is only one openly gay Member of Parliament in Canada, New Democrat Svend Robinson. There are none in the provincial legislatures, and only a handful in municipal governments.

In stark contrast, there are more than 70 openly gay and lesbian elected officials in the United States. President Clinton had at least 15 lesbians and gay men on his transition team, and he has appointed a lesbian politician as an undersecretary in his administration.

Ontario Premier Bob Rae has appointed both a lesbian and a gay man to the Ontario Human Rights Commission. The Ontario NDP's lesbigay caucus is an officially-recognized organization within the party.

A number of political leaders abroad have appointed officials to act as liaison persons with the lesbian and gay communities within their jurisdictions.

The EGALE questionnaire asked

Would you encourage your party to actively recruit openly gay and lesbian candidates?

Conservatives: ?

"The Progressive Conservative Party does not inquire as to the sexual orientation of its members or candidates."

Liberals: ?

"The Liberal Party does not discriminate on any basis, including sexual orientation."

New Democrats: Yes

"The NDP currently has three openly gay or lesbian candidates running in the next election."

Would you encourage your party to appoint a staff person to act as a liaison with the lesbian and gay community?

Conservatives: ?

Most Conservatives said this is an "internal decision of the Party."

Kim Campbell said, "I would discuss this possibility with my party."

Liberals: ?

"The Liberal Party has yet to determine what liaison staff will be necessary should we form the next government....individual Liberal critics are responsible for bringing the concerns of the various groups forward in caucus."

New Democrats: Yes

MP Svend Robinson noted that he and his staff have played an active liaison role with the lesbian, gay and bisexual communities.

If your party forms the next government, would you support the appointment of well-qualified, openly gay men and lesbians to Order-in-Council positions?

Conservatives: ?

"The Progressive Conservative Party does not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation."

Liberals: ?

"We will always endeavour to ensure that our appointments reflect the diversity of Canadian society."

New Democrats: Yes

National Party says yes to gay rights

The recently-formed National Party of Canada has replied positively to almost all questions on the EGALE questionnaire.

Party leader Mel Hurtig responded with a clear YES to questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15. (See list of questions on page 7.)

On questions relating to health, Hurtig said he would consider lesbian and gay health issues as part of a comprehensive review aimed at "restructuring and strengthening" federal health standards.

Hurtig admitted he has not spoken publicly on sexual orientation issues, nor has he attended lesbian and gay community events.

A former Edmonton publisher, Hurtig is best known for his crusade against free trade with the United States.

Bloc says OUI to gay rights

Bloc Quebecois leader Lucien Bouchard asked Bloc MP Gilles Duceppe to respond to the EGALE questionnaire on his behalf. Duceppe is the MP for Laurier-Sainte-Marie, a riding that includes Montreal's gay village.

We were particularly anxious to receive the Bloc's response. As a relatively young party, it has previously given little indication of its position on these issues.

If Duceppe's response represents official party policy, then the Bloc is one of the most progressive

parties on sexual orientation issues. He replied with a clear YES to 14 out of 17 questions. (See chart on page 7.)

Mr. Duceppe does not support special breast cancer programs targeted at lesbians. He also says the Bloc does not consider sexual orientation as a factor in candidate recruitment.

We hope that Mr. Duceppe can convince his leader and his fellow Bloc candidates to speak out on lesbigay issues in this election campaign.

REFORM PARTY OPPOSES GAY RIGHTS AMENDMENT

Manning says homosexuality destructive to society

Parliament's sole Reform Party MP, Deborah Grey, declined to complete EGALE's questionnaire. In a letter to EGALE, Grey said, "I can assure you I will make my positions known to my constituents at election time." Grey has previously indicated she opposes a sexual orientation amendment to the Canadian Human Rights Act.

Reform Party leader Preston Manning also declined to complete the questionnaire.

In a letter to EGALE, party policy manager Dimitri Pantazopoulos said, "...we have decided that in the interest of maintaining some distance between our party and public interest advocacy groups, we will not respond to such questionnaires."

Pantazopoulos did offer some general comments reflecting the party's position on a sexual orientation amendment for the Canadian Human Rights Act:

"It is our belief that all Canadians deserve to be protected from discriminatory or violent acts. However, we believe it is the acts of discrimination or violence which should be addressed without conferring a status upon any group of individuals, and we furthermore advocate increased protection of law abiding citizens from criminal elements. In fact, we are the political party most closely associated with the need for greater protection of citizens through criminal justice reforms."

Preston Manning has publicly stated his view that "homosexuality is destructive to the individual, and in the long run, society."

PROMOTING GREATER AWARENESS

Overcoming invisibility key to political change

Because most lesbians and gay men are not recognizable as such to the general public, many people believe that the community is a very small one. One of the reasons politicians ignore us is that they think there aren't many of us.

Politicians who fail to publicly address sexual orientation issues help perpetuate our invisibility. Few politicians are well-versed on the issues, few attend lesbian and gay community activities, and many seem reluctant to even say the words lesbian and gay in public.

The EGALE questionnaire asked

Have you spoken in the House of Commons or elsewhere on sexual orientation issues?

Kim Campbell: "Yes....I have been a strong advocate in a number of forums for adding sexual orientation as a prohibited ground of discrimination under the Canadian Human Rights Act."

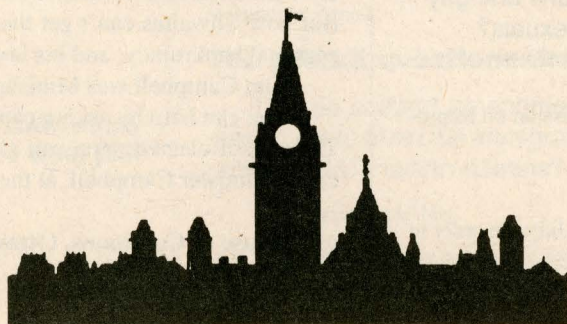
Jean Chrétien avoided answering the question, and instead spoke about the Liberal critics who address various sexual orientation issues. As far as we have been able to determine, he has never spoken publicly on sexual orientation issues since becoming Liberal leader.

Audrey McLaughlin did not answer this question. However, she has spoken publicly on sexual orientation issues on a number of occasions.

Have you attended lesbian and gay community activities?

Kim Campbell: "Yes, I have attended a number of such activities in my riding and elsewhere."

Jean Chrétien and Audrey McLaughlin did not answer this question. We do not know if they have attended community activities.



Hate watch

It is time to document the lies.

EGALE believes there is a need for a more coordinated response to the increase in hate literature. Ultimately we would like to see a national lesbigay organization assume responsibility for collecting hateful material from right-wing groups, politicians and the media.

In the meantime, please send us any examples of anti-gay articles, letters, pamphlets, television programs, etc.

EGALE
2 Daly Avenue
Ottawa, Ontario
K1N 6E2



The EGALE questionnaire: an explanation

Early in 1993, EGALE drafted a detailed questionnaire on sexual orientation issues. Each of the 17 questions was accompanied by a background on the issue. Following consultations with many lesbian and gay rights activists, the questionnaire was finalized, and mailed to all Members of Parliament in late April. We asked MPs to respond by the end of May.

Questionnaires were also sent to Reform Party leader Preston Manning and National Party leader Mel Hurtig, who do not currently sit in the House of Commons.

A reminder letter was sent to all MPs in June. By mid-July, less than 30 MPs had returned completed questionnaires, giving us some idea of the importance most politicians attach to lesbian and gay rights issues. There are 295 Members of Parliament in the House of Commons.

A number of MPs acknowledged receiving the questionnaire, but declined to complete it, for various reasons.

However, we were able to obtain responses from the main political parties, with the exception of the Reform Party. (See page 6.)

The Conservatives, Liberals and New Democrats prepared standard responses for use by their MPs. Liberal leader Jean Chrétien and NDP leader Audrey McLaughlin used these standard party responses. Kim Campbell, who was a leadership candidate at the time, sent her own individual response. Brian Mulroney did not respond. Bloc Quebecois leader Lucien Bouchard asked a caucus colleague, MP Gilles Duceppe, to respond on behalf of the Bloc.

Some MPs did not use their party's standard response, and completed the questionnaire on their own. Please see the chart at right for MPs' responses.

EGALE invited all MPs to add comments to their YES or NO responses. Many did so, others did not. Some answered with comments *instead* of YES or NO responses.

Because there is not enough space here to include all the comments of all the respondents, we have selected what we consider the most relevant excerpts from the information provided.

If you would like a copy of the complete EGALE questionnaire or a particular MP's response, please send a stamped, self-addressed large envelope with your request to the following address:

EGALE
2 Daly Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 6E2

MP's Responses to the EGALE Questionnaire on Sexual Orientation Issues

NAME	PARTY	QUESTIONS																
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Kim Campbell	PC	Y	N	?	?	?	?	?	N	?	N	?	?	?	?	Y	Y	
Lee Clark	PC	Y	N	?	?	?	N	?	N	?	N	?	N	?	?	?	?	
Terry Clifford	PC	Y	N	?	?	?	N	N	N	?	N	?	N	?	N	Y	N	
Mary Collins	PC	Y	N	?	?	?	N	?	N	?	N	?	N	?	?	Y	N	
Yvon Côté	PC	Y	N	N	N	?	N	Y	?	?	N	?	Y	?	?	Y	N	
Murry Dorin	PC	Y	N	N	?	?	N	?	N	?	N	?	?	?	?	?	?	
Jim Edwards	PC	Y	N	?	?	?	N	?	N	N	N	?	N	?	?	?	?	
Gabriel Larrivée	PC	?	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	
C.-E. Marin	PC	Y	N	?	?	?	N	?	N	?	N	?	N	?	?	?	?	
J.-M. Robitaille	PC	Y	N	?	?	?	N	?	N	?	N	?	N	?	?	N	N	
Jean Chrétien	LIB	Y	?	?	?	?	?	?	Y	?	?	?	Y	?	?	?	?	
John Harvard	LIB	Y	?	?	Y	?	?	?	Y	Y	Y	?	Y	?	?	N	N	
Derek Lee	LIB	Y	N	?	Y	N	N	N	Y	Y	?	N	N	N	Y	N	N	
Christine Stewart	LIB	Y	?	?	?	N	?	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N	?	N	
David Walker	LIB	Y	Y	?	?	N	Y	Y	Y	?	Y	?	Y	N	N	N	Y	
Les Benjamin	NDP	Y	N	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	
Dawn Black	NDP	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
John Brewin	NDP	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Ron Fisher	NDP	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Dan Heap	NDP	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Lynn Hunter	NDP	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Jim Karpoff	NDP	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Joy Langan	NDP	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Audrey McLaughlin	NDP	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	?	?	
Svend Robinson	NDP	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Ian Waddell	NDP	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
Neil Young	NDP	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	?	
Gilles Duceppe	BQ	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	?	Y	Y	
Mel Hurtig*	NAT	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	?	Y	?	?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	

* Note: National Party leader Mel Hurtig is not a Member of Parliament.

The EGALE questionnaire

1. Do you support adding sexual orientation to the list of prohibited grounds of discrimination in the Canadian Human Rights Act?
2. Do you agree that the proposed definition of marital status in Bill C-108 discriminates unfairly against same-sex couples?
3. Do you believe that the federal government should extend employee benefits to the same-sex partners of federal employees?
4. Do you support a review of federal legislation with the aim of allowing same-sex couples to share the same benefits and responsibilities as heterosexual couples?
5. Do you support changes to federal marriage law to recognize same-sex marriages?
6. Do you support amendments to the Immigration Act to allow the immigration of same-sex partners of Canadian citizens?
7. Do you believe Canada should grant asylum to refugees with a well-founded fear of persecution on the basis of sexual orientation?
8. Do you support the reinstatement of the Court Challenges Program?

9. Would you support federally-funded research and public education programs to address the problem of breast cancer among lesbians?
10. Do you agree that federal AIDS funding should be increased to \$55 million a year?
11. Do you support health system policies that would provide lesbians and gay men with the same access to reproductive technologies as heterosexuals?
12. Do you support amendments to the Criminal Code to prohibit hate crimes based on sexual orientation?
13. Would you encourage your party to actively recruit openly gay and lesbian candidates?
14. Would you encourage your party to appoint a staff person to act as a liaison with the lesbian and gay community?
15. If your party forms the next government, would you support the appointment of well-qualified, openly gay men and lesbians to Order-in-Council positions?
16. Have you spoken in the House of Commons or elsewhere on sexual orientation issues?
17. Have you attended lesbian and gay community activities?

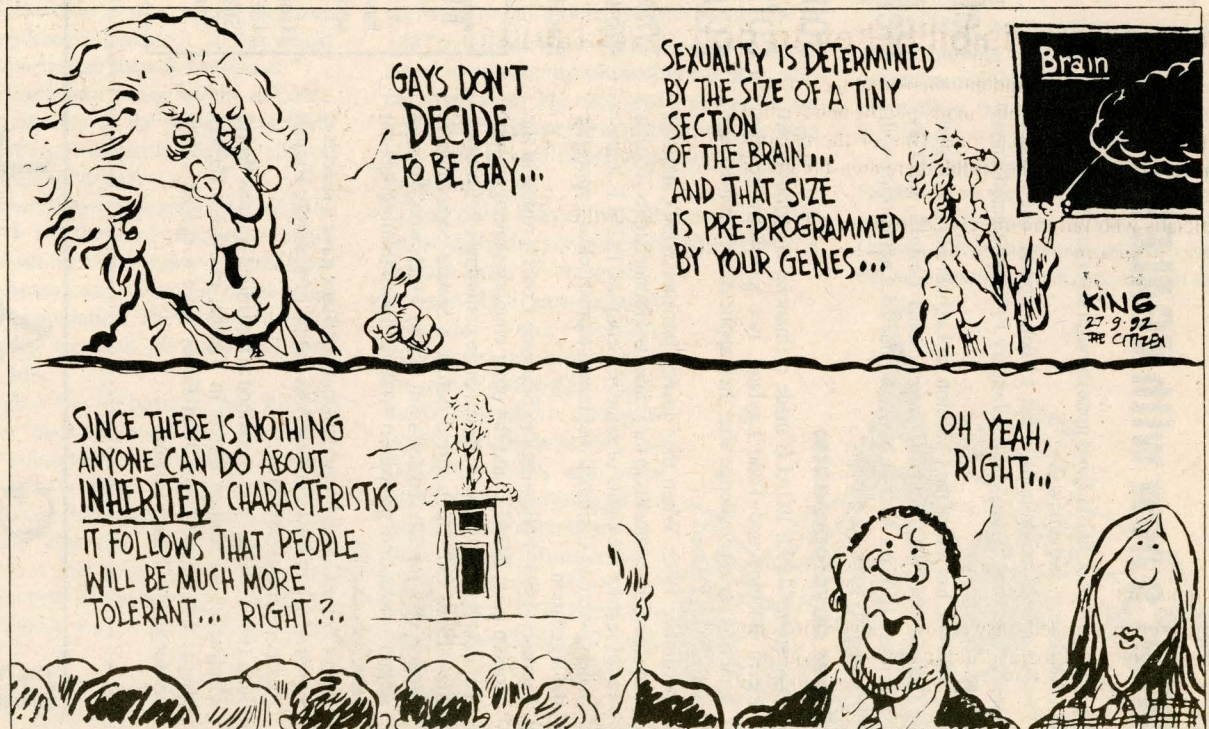
Free societies don't censor

Censorship has always been a powerful tool used to intimidate the lesbian and gay community. Canada Customs has repeatedly harassed lesbian, gay and feminist bookstores by seizing materials at the border. Right-wing politicians and media have attacked arts institutions that dare to include queer content in their artistic activities. All three major parties in Parliament recently supported a pornography bill that was universally condemned by civil libertarians as a threat to freedom of expression.

CensorStop is an organization attempting to create awareness about the threat of censorship in Canada. The group has been active in Toronto for some time, and local groups have recently been established in cities across the country, from Vancouver to Halifax.

Write to CensorStop for information on how you can get involved. You may also want to contact your local lesbian, gay or feminist bookstore.

CensorStop
P.O. Box 888
Station F
Toronto, Ontario
M4Y 2N8



Courtesy: Alan King, The Ottawa Citizen

What's new with EGALE?

Over the past year, EGALE has gone through an extensive process of consultation and renewal.

We sought community input to help update our mission statement and our by-laws, and in January 1993, we elected a new Board of Directors.

EGALE has joined the Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Rights in Ontario (CLGRO) and the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA). And we have continued our networking with other equality-seeking groups.

Other developments:

- November 1992: EGALE made a financial contribution to Pierre Beaulne and Todd Layland, two gay activists who launched a court challenge after their application for a marriage license was refused.
- December 1992: When then justice minister Kim Campbell introduced amendments to the Canadian Human Rights Act that would restrict the rights of same-sex couples, EGALE immediately wrote to Campbell and issued a press release opposing the legislation.
- February 1993: Following the Supreme Court's ruling in the Mossop case, EGALE and the other equality-seeking groups that intervened in the case held a press conference in Ottawa.
- May 1993: EGALE testified before a Senate committee in support of a private senator's bill (S-15) which would ensure sexual orientation protection without discriminating against same-sex couples.
- June 1993: EGALE President Denis LeBlanc gave a speech at a conference of the Canadian Association of Statutory Human Rights Agencies in Ottawa.
- June 1993: EGALE was accredited to the United Nations World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna. EGALE's Human Rights Committee Chair John Fisher gave a speech at the conference's plenary session.

The EGALE Election Project

Get involved!

Help make a difference!

Join EGALE, or make a contribution to support the EGALE Election Project.

"The liberation of homosexuals can only be the work of homosexuals themselves."

Kirt Hiller, Action Committee of the Hirschfeld Institute

Thanks!

EGALE wishes to thank the many volunteers who have assisted with the publication and distribution of this special election issue of InfoEGALE.

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ÉGALITÉ POUR LES GAIS ET LES LESBIENNES

Arts Court, 2 Daly Avenue
Ottawa, K1N 6E2

Phone: (613) 230-1043

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- Other _____
 Membership for those with limited incomes: \$10

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