



## Communique

Volume II: No. 8

October 1981

REPORT OF NLN MEETING 9-27-81

A major topic of discussion at the September business meeting was finances. NLN is very low on funds. The treasurer reported balances of \$20.10 and \$35.11 in our U.S. and Canadian accounts respectively. We recently arranged for a service-charge-free checking account on our U.S. bank account which will help. But we need to raise funds to continue to publish this newsletter and to pay for ever-increasing postal rates. (We are currently applying for non-profit organization status which would allow us to mail for 3.5¢ (U.S.) per item -- but it will take until early 1982 to get the permit.)

Several measures were adopted by the membership at the meeting: (1) Non-NLN members will be asked to pay \$1 when attending any NLN business meeting or social function. (2) A newly-formed food committee, which will be responsible for coordinating our meals which follow the business meeting, will be given the responsibility as well to collect financial donations from any NLN members who fail to contribute to our repast. (3) Canadian funds will no longer be accepted at par. With an exchange rate of nearly 20%, we will now set our cost of newsletter subscription and membership fee in U.S. funds only. (4) Our low-income membership fee (\$6) no longer exists. In lieu of that we will accept fees paid in installments. All memberships are now \$10, Communique subscriptions are \$7. (5) NLN's fiscal year will no longer be January 1 to December 31. We will change our fiscal year to October 1 through September 30. This is for several reasons: Many NLN members are away summers and September is a new beginning -- school, TV shows, new car models, and now our fiscal year; because the potato harvest is from mid-September to mid-October, people are more likely to have cash to pay for NLN memberships in Sept/Oct; January 1st, because it is post-Christmas season and heavy shopping and bills, is a poor time to ask people for membership fees.

Therefore, let everyone be informed that your 1981 membership has expired. PLEASE renew your NLN membership on the enclosed form (or, join us as a new member), and encourage someone else to join. This is the LAST newsletter we can afford to send to you unless we hear from you. We GLADLY accept anonymous contributions. This is YOUR organization. In order to stay financially healthy, we need your support. Merci!



## ▼ COMMENTARY - by benj. ▼

It's been 4 days since I returned from Fredericton and the 4th Atlantic Community Conference of Lesbians and Gay Men -- and I'm still high from the weekend. I've attended a number of such regional conferences in New England and the Maritimes, and I must say that this was the most enjoyable one that I've been to. Most every event was worthwhile: the social evenings, the workshops, the plenary sessions. Other conference organizers can pick up some ideas from our Fredericton hosts -- who always supply that famous "Maritime Hospitality". (The information packet which we received upon registration included a welcome letter from the Mayor of Fredericton!)

As with every weekend event which involves "business", the personal aspect is most important. Friday evening's reception provided the right opportunity for conference attendees, wearing the necessary name tags, to meet and greet old friends and new.

Saturday began with the keynote address followed by workshops. Unfortunately, I was disappointed with the keynote speaker, Don Clark, PhD from San Francisco, author of Loving Someone Gay and Living Gay. He spoke softly, in a monotone, and I found his address totally uninspiring. A "big name" at a conference does not always prove to be the best choice. If we are to talk of regional organizing and regional outreach, surely there must be local people we can use as resources rather than big names from far away.

The workshop periods were organized just right -- with enough time for discussion (2½ hours) and enough time for thought afterwards. My only regret is that I could attend just 2 workshops, since there were several others which attracted my attention. (Only 2 periods with 4 workshop choices each were offered.) The practice of pre-registration for workshops is an excellent idea -- it succeeded in limiting the size of all the discussion groups.

After a break at suppertime, entertainment was provided by Willie Sordill, a "gay-positive" (which means "not gay but OK") musician. A sing-a-long folk singer seemed very much out of place for the entertainment that night. For the few people who attended the concert, their interest in what he was singing seemed lacking.

Following the entertainment was a continuation (of sorts) of the Friday evening social -- sans name tags.



On Sunday, following the Metropolitan Community Church's Christian service, was a meeting of the Atlantic Gay Alliance (see accompanying story) followed by the final plenary session. It is during this session that the results of workshops are reported, plaudits, thank yous, complaints, and comments are all heard -- a final wrap-up. It was at this plenary that one of NLN's bilingual members offered his services at next year's conference as a translator and possible facilitator in workshops such as "Gay and Lesbian Parents" and "Married Gay Men and Lesbians" (2 of this year's workshops) which would be offered next year en français. This will surely help to fulfill a great need which was very evident at this year's conference -- the need to be able to include our francophone sisters and brothers in all activities. There was a large number of conference attendees from northeastern New Brunswick -- the Tracadie area; it was evident at one of the workshops I attended that they felt left out. It was ironic that that workshop was entitled "Atlantic Outreach". I'm hopeful that next year's conference will more truly be an Atlantic conference where both francophone and anglophone members will feel included.

Next year's conference will be in Halifax, hosted by the members of Making Waves: An Atlantic Quarterly for Lesbians and Gay Men. I look forward to going to next year's gathering. (I only regret that they plan to discontinue the VIARAIL train from Maine to Nova Scotia -- it's so much more pleasant than travelling by bus or having to drive!)

A final comment. It was nice to see such a large turnout of NLN members -- I saw 25% of our total membership in Fredericton. Having been active in NLN since its inception, I'm seeing more and more people becoming involved -- not just involved in NLN activities or regional conferences, but more "involved" in their own lives -- more interested and more committed to being themselves and being less afraid to be themselves -- more people are coming out. It makes me feel good because now I have more people with whom I can talk and relate to about being gay, about going through what we experience as lesbians and gay men in a society which has, as yet, to acknowledge us as equal members. It feels good to hear someone make a commitment to help other gay people by offering his skills at translating; it feels good when it becomes easier each month for us to find someone who will volunteer her or his home so we can meet; it feels good to see more people in NLN become aware of the needs of our group even in such a small step as to want to form a food committee to coordinate our pot-luck meals every month.



I've grown as a result of this weekend -- I've learned to become more patient with the changes which others go through in their coming out processes. It's not easy being a gay man or a lesbian in society today, especially in our small Maine and New Brunswick towns -- we don't have the anonymity of the cities; but as more and more of us begin to deal with our homosexuality, as we become less afraid to not just ACT gay but to BE gay, the people in our region will begin to get used to seeing, meeting, and talking to gay people as "normal" -- and it will make it easier for me, too, to live in this rural and beautiful part of the world. And I thank you all. *Benj.*

▼ AGA - 3; ALGA - 5 ▼

Changes and growth occurred in Fredericton at the 4th Atlantic Community Conference of Lesbians and Gay Men/4e Conférence de la Communauté des lesbiennes et des Gais d'Atlantique. The umbrella group of gay and lesbian organizations in Atlantic Canada has changed its name: the AGA (Atlantic Gay Alliance/ Association des Gai(e)s d'Atlantique) is now the ALGA: Atlantic Lesbian and Gay Association/Association des lesbiennes et des Gais d'Atlantique. This name change is to publicly note the fact that both women and men are homosexual. When many straight people think of "gay", they think of men; by adding the term lesbian, they can't avoid taking note of the existence of women in the Association. (Though "Alliance" is a stronger bonding term than "Association", in order to maintain a linguistic continuity, "Association" is used in both French and English.)

In addition to a name change, an increase in ALGA member groups occurred. The 3 original groups, Northern Lambda Nord (NLN, serving northern Maine and northwestern New Brunswick), Fredericton Lesbians and Gays (FLAG, central New Brunswick), and Gay Alliance for Equality (GAE, Halifax, Nova Scotia) were joined by two more ALGA members: the collective which publishes Making Waves (in Halifax) and a newly-formed group, Southeast Lambda sud-est, an organization in Moncton. We welcome our brothers and sisters to the ALGA and look forward to increased communication within the Atlantic region.

▼ ALGA PROTESTS U.S. IMMIGRATION POLICY ▼

The ALGA is now coordinating a multi-fronted political action: a region-wide protest of U.S. immigration policy which specifically EXCLUDES non-American lesbians and gay men from

Northern Lambda Nord CP/Box 990 Caribou Maine 04736 USA

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\*\*\*\*\* NLN \*\*\*\*\*

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## Making Waves

An Atlantic quarterly  
for Lesbians & Gay men

Making Waves is published by an independent, non-profit collective of lesbians and gaymen. It is the first publication to be directed towards the entire Atlantic lesbian/gay community. We need your support to make it work. At \$4 a year, it is not expensive, and you can help to finance a journal that serves all of us.

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A Women's Newsletter

TELEWOMAN

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COMMUNIQUE is published by Northern Lambda Nord, Box 990, Caribou, Maine 04736 USA. COMMUNIQUE solicits articles of interest to the lesbian-gay male community of Northern Maine, Northwestern New Brunswick, and Témiscouata, Québec. Printing deadline is the first of each month. Subscriptions: \$7 (US)/year. NLN membership: \$10 (US) includes COMMUNIQUE. Northern Lambda Nord is a member of the Atlantic Lesbian and Gay Association (Canada).

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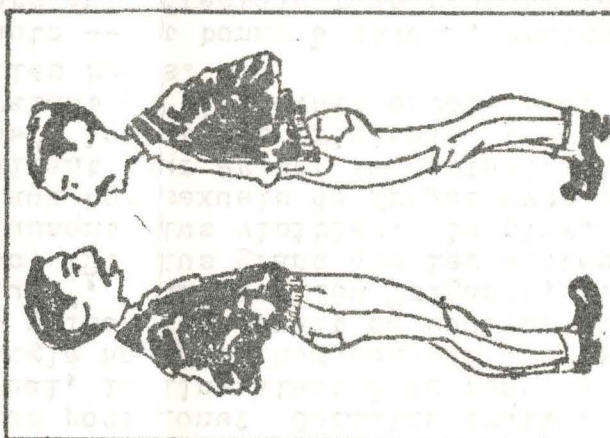
entering the U.S. Originally planned by NLN to coincide with other protests world-wide, the other ALGA members have agreed to join NLN's leafletting campaign. Information sheets (in both English and French) will be circulated by NLN in all the Maine-New Brunswick border towns at shopping center parking lots to inform the people of this area of the discriminatory policy of the US Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). Residents of our border town areas cross through customs daily, sometimes even several times per day. We want them to be aware of the situation some of us face as "outlaws". The other ALGA members will be circulating similar flyers in their areas.

## ▼ NEW NIGHT SPOT IN MAINE'S CAPITOL ▼

Going to Augusta? If so, check out PAPA JOE'S any night, especially on Friday and Saturday when dancing, mixed drinks, food and friendly folks add up to a good time. Let's support this local bar -- the proprietors really care about us. Papa Joe's, 76 Mount Vernon Avenue, Augusta, Maine, 623-4041.

--- D.W.

COMMUNIQUE est publié par Northern Lambda Nord, C.P. 990, Caribou, Maine 04736 USA. Tous nos lecteurs sont invités de nous faire parvenir des articles pour le COMMUNIQUE. Vos articles doivent nous parvenir au début de chaque mois. Nos cotisations sont les suivantes: \$7 (US) souscription au COMMUNIQUE; \$10 (US) cotisation de membre et souscription au COMMUNIQUE. Northern Lambda Nord est membre de l'Association des lesbiennes et des Gais de l'Atlantique.



"Ta maison de débauche ou la mienne?" - BERDACHE

un film -- espérons qu'il sera bien fait -- est susceptible de renseigner les millions de citoyens qui ont le droit -- et le devoir -- de connaître ce qu'on pourrait appeler -- étant donné le temps qu'il aura fallu pour échapper à la censure -- le dernier crime nazi.

-- Pierre Guesnel (BERDACHE)



Car l'injustice et la cruauté se perpétuent. Après la guerre, certaines mesures ont été prises afin de réparer, autant qu'il se pouvait, les dommages subis par les prisonniers des camps. Or, il y a deux catégories auxquelles ces réparations sont toujours refusées: les "droits communs" et les homosexuels. La société civile considérant toujours que les horreurs qu'ils ont subies n'effacent pas leur crime devant la loi.

Depuis longtemps, on croit qu'il n'y eut jamais humains plus hais, plus méprisés que les Juifs; peut-être est-il nécessaire de revoir nos positions? Certains traits, rapportés par Hegel dans son Journal, inclineraient à le penser. Ainsi exigeait-on que le Triangle Rose des homosexuels (rapelons que chaque catégorie de prisonniers avait sa couleur distinctive: Rouge pour les "politiques", Brun pour les Tziganes, Vert pour les "droit communs", etc) fût plus grand que les autres pour bien s'assurer qu'ils fussent plus visibles. De plus, on interdisait sévèrement aux homosexuels de frayer avec les autres prisonniers sollicitant pour éviter la contamination. Même les "droits communs", les grands criminels, pourtant au ban de la société, considéraient qu'il y avait encore plus bas qu'eux: c'est-à-dire, les homos.

Mais, chose étonnante -- et bonne à savoir, vraiment -- c'est que les prisonniers qui affectaient le plus profond mépris pour les homosexuels étaient les "politiques". (Chose étonnante, en effet, que les gens qui prétendent à une conscience sociale supérieure soient aussi "aliénés" que les autres quand il s'agit de sexualité!) A ces "politiques" -- souvent de gauche! -- Hocquenghem s'en prend d'ailleurs violemment, d'évoquant en particulier certains qui sont devenus vedettes de la télévision et qui se répandaient abondamment sur leur glorieux passé de résistants mais sans jamais dire un seul mot sur ces milliers de morts dont le seul tort était d'aimer autrement qu'eux!

Il y a quelque chose de désespéré dans le texte de Hocquenghem qui ne semble pas croire à un véritable salut pour les gens de sa condition. Hélas! un simple survol de l'histoire semblerait lui donner raison. Et le silence orchestré autour des homosexuels assassinés dans les camps nazis n'est pas pour rassurer.

La dénonciation des crimes nazis contre les homosexuels n'est qu'une tâche, parmi bien d'autres, dans la lutte à mener contre la répression. Hocquenghem suggère qu'à partir de ce document on fasse un film. Suggestion judiciaire. Seul



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La grande nouveauté, c'est d'apprendre qu'il y eut des dizaines -- peut-être des centaines -- de milliers de personnes mortes et torturées dans les camps et dont le seul crime était l'homosexualité. Comment se fait-il que cette information énorme n'ait pas été plus largement diffusée? Aurait-elle été tenue systématiquement secrète? Y aurait-il eu quelque conspiration du silence pour étouffer un crime dont la dénonciation eût été, pour plusieurs, embarrassante? C'est, en tout cas, l'avis de Guy Hocquenghem, qui donne à ce livre une préface -- qu'il faut lire absolument -- où il nous est parlé notamment d'un certain trucage qui aurait consisté à effacer sur la liste des détenus ceux qui portaient le Triangle rose.

Or, pour Hocquenghem, cette vaste conspiration du silence n'est qu'un signe -- particulièrement grave -- d'un phénomène plus général qui est la répression, presque universelle, de l'homosexualité.

Autrement dit, la politique nazie d'extermination des homosexuels ne serait qu'un cas particulier d'une loi générale, la pointe extrême, l'aboutissement monstrueux d'une certaine logique de la répression.

Bien sûr, les nazis sont allés trop loin! Aucun être civilisé ne saurait approuver tranquillement de pareils actes. Mais, en décidant, d'exterminer les homosexuels, -- comme d'ailleurs les fous, les associés, les "droits communs" -- les nazis ne répondaient-ils pas aux desirs secrets, inavoués de tant d'hommes citoyens? Voilà la vérité scandaleuse: l'extermination des homosexuels -- ces dégénérés -- ne pouvait que faire l'affaire de bien des gens. Vérité qu'on n'est pas près d'admettre, et contre laquelle on n'a pas fini de résister. On a fait des juifs, selon la formule d'Hocquenghem, les "victims exemplaires de la barbarie nazie". (On a été, en effet, plus discret sur les Tziganes et sur les prisonniers de droit commun.) Or, il n'est pas indifférent de noter que cette publicité faite aux crimes perpétrés contre les juifs n'est pas indépendante du pouvoir des juifs, particulièrement américains, à travers le monde. Et, certes, on ne saurait protester contre cette publicité parfaitement juste et légitime. De contre quoi, pourtant, il faut protester vivement désormais, c'est contre le silence qu'on a systématiquement organisé et entretenu, depuis la guerre, autour du meurtre collectif de ceux qu'on appelle -- mais serait-ce par dérision? -- les "gats".



Réglons une chose une fois pour toutes: ce livre n'a aucune valeur littéraire. Entièrement dépourvu d'art, c'est un récit dits "objectif", écrit sur un ton neutre, un ton de procès-verbal, et qui ignore presque complètement les états d'âme. Sous la plume d'un grand écrivain, certaines pages seraient inoubliables. Mais, sans doute, l'absence du "style" est-elle une chance, le "plaisir du texte" risquant de nous distraire de l'essentiel. Description brute donc, et sans tard, d'une réalité brutale. Sans effet esthétique. Et, quant à l'effet dramatique, vraiment, les faits seuls suffisent.

En 1939, un jeune homme de 22 ans, bourgeois de Vienne, plutôt a-politique, est arrêté par la Gestapo, puis interne dans un camp de concentration. Il y restera 6 ans.

C'est le récit de cette détention qu'il nous donne aujourd'hui, avec les raisons de son internement, qu'il a attendu 30 ans avant de divulguer, nous verrons pourquoi tout-à-l'heure. Chronique d'une vie en enfer, oh, pour survivre, on devait oublier tout code d'éthique ou d'honneur. La chance de Heger fut certainement d'être habile. Mais aussi, et peut-être surtout, d'avoir été jeune et beau. En prison comme ailleurs, la jeunesse et la beauté sont des richesses qu'on peut troquer contre des protections, des faveurs. Heger ne regrette pas d'avoir beaucoup fait pour survivre. Qui le lui reprochera?

L'originalité de ce livre n'est pas dans le rapport et la description des humiliations et des tortures que les nazis font subir à leurs détenus. Sur les horreurs des camps nazis, sans doute n'y a-t-il plus rien à ajouter. La nouveauté vient du fait qu'il s'agit du témoignage d'un détenu homosexuel interne précisément pour cause d'homosexualité et que ce témoignage -- document sans précédent, d'un son prix: -- révèle brutalement ce fait soigneusement caché jusqu'ici, c'est-à-dire la volonté nazie d'exterminer l'engance homosexuelle à l'instar de celle des juifs! Telle est la nouveauté radicale de ce livre et qui lui donne, sans doute, une importance historique capitale.