

## Air Force Convicts Coronado

FAYETTEVILLE (POPE AIR FORCE BASE)-- Capt. Robert N. Coronado was dismissed from the U.S. Air Force on Oct. 15. He was convicted by a military jury of consensual sodomy and conduct unbecoming an officer. The dismissal is the equivalent of a dishonorable discharge and is being appealed.

Coronado was first arrested by civilian authorities after Army paratrooper, Pfc. Jonathan Heaton accused Coronado of having drugged and raped him on Aug. 17. Civilian authorities dropped charges against Coronado when no evidence of force was found and after Heaton failed to appear in court on four different occasions.

However, in October the Air Force charged Coronado with forceful sodomy. At the time of the alleged incident, Coronado was both off duty and off base. The question of jurisdiction in the case remains unresolved.

Coronado's first military lawyer procured from him a statement describing his sex with Heaton, promising Coronado a better character discharge for cooperating. The prosecution relied heavily on the statement. The five-officer jury rejected the charge of force but convicted Coronado of consensual sodomy.

Coronado's civilian lawyers, T. Hutchens and M. Waple in Fayetteville, noted the court's leniency; in addition to the dismissal, the court could have sentenced him to five years' hard labor, to pay a fine set by the jury, and to forfeit pay and allowances.

The appeal of the case will focus on three points:

-Coronado's first military attorney left the service before the case came up for trial and Coronado met his replacement only one week before the trial. Chief trial judge Col. Smith denied a delay for the trial.

-The first military lawyer was allowed to testify against Coronado.

-The court seated jurors over defense objections that they were hostile to homosexuals.

In addition to the appeal, Coronado has entered suit in federal court accusing the Air Force of violating his civil rights and alleging that the prosecution is a bad faith action because it seeks to dismiss him solely because he is a homosexual.

Coronado has requested the financial support of the Playboy Foundation for his appeal. The San Francisco-based Gay Rights Advocates, when asked for a recommendation by the Foundation on Coronado's request, recommended approval.

Coronado's defense has cost him \$15,000, of which he has paid \$5000. He has appealed to the public for support. The Coronado Defense Fund (P.O. Box 40954, Fayetteville, NC 28304) is helping to raise money, and the North Carolina Human Rights Fund (P.O. Box 10782, Raleigh, NC 27605) has also given aid.

## UNC-G Students Protest Gays

GREENSBORO--On Nov. 15 an undetermined number of anti-gay student demonstrators gathered in front of Strong Hall on the UNC-G campus in order to protest an "educational seminar on homosexuality" being held in the dormitory basement.

The seminar was organized by Richard Stilley, Graduate Counselor for Strong Hall, in order to alleviate rising tensions between heterosexual and homosexual dorm residents. The tension came about through repeated incidents of "verbal harassments" exchanged by the students in the dorm.

Stilley said the purpose of the seminar was "a give and take session...to air people's opinions and gripes." He organized the event after consulting with gay residents of the dorm. Stilley stressed that it was not a product of the Gay Student Movement or the newly formed

Gay Student Union at UNC-G.

Protesters chanted and jeered, waving banners such as "John Wayne Ain't Queer" and "Gays Go Home." They complied with requests from Campus Security that no masks be worn or firecrackers set off; the protest was peaceful.

Seminar participants invited the protesters to come in to discuss the issues, but these invitations were shouted down.

The Rev. Joe Flora, a seminar participant who met with the protesters, stated that a number of students involved later confessed that they had been uncomfortable in the protest and that it "had caused them to do a lot of serious thinking." Gay dorm resident Rick Darnell said that verbal harassment of gays had increased considerably since the protest.