

Regional

Gay rights

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — The Army has no more justification in barring homosexuals from service than it did in locking up Japanese-Americans in World War II, a lawyer argued Wednesday before a federal appeals panel in a historic discrimination case.

"There was no evidence to support the Army's assertion that all Japanese-Americans were not loyal. There is no evidence to support the Army's assertion that all homosexuals cannot effectively serve the military," said James Lobsenz, an American Civil Liberties Union lawyer representing a discharged gay soldier from Tacoma, Wash.

The Army's goal in excluding homosexuals, Lobsenz said, is "to cater to private bigotry."

But Justice Department attorney E. Roy Hawken said the Army had the right to follow "society's moral judgments" against homosexuals.

He contended a 1986 Supreme Court ruling upholding a Georgia anti-sodomy law had foreclosed broad constitutional protections for homosexuals, an argument Lobsenz disputed.

In a courtroom packed with nearly 100 spectators, including plaintiff Perry Watkins, an 11-judge panel of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals heard more than an hour of arguments in reconsidering a decision by a smaller panel of the court this February.

In the earlier decision, the court ruled 2-1 that the Army's ban on homosexuals was invalid, and declared that homosexuals, as a historically persecuted group, were entitled to the same strict constitutional protections against discrimination given to racial and religious minorities.

Wobblies in Portland

PORTLAND. (AP) — The Industrial Workers of the World, known more popularly as the Wobblies, has won an organizing election in Oregon for the first time since the late 1930s.

The IWW was named bargaining agent last week by the Portland canvassing employees of Oregon Sane Inc., an organization seeking nuclear arms reduction.

Of the 11 eligible voters, seven cast ballots, all in favor of the IWW's Local IU670. IWW organizer Billy Don Robinson said the victory was a reminder that the Wobblies haven't faded from the American labor picture.

"The IWW has had a 25 percent membership increase across the country in the past year," Robinson said.

The union has 1,200 dues-paying members, he said, with many others who "support our philosophy and direct-action tactics."

Organized in 1905, the IWW anti-capitalistic message played well in the lumber camps of the Pacific Northwest in the early part of the century.

Once the most militant and

dramatic organization in American labor, the union attracted many members but was unable to hold them together for long.

"Hey, we're alive and well," Robinson said. "Our headquarters is in Chicago, and organizers like myself can be found in almost every state in the nation."

Jackson visits Oregon

PORTLAND. (AP) — Jesse Jackson visited a violence-ridden housing project today after arriving in Oregon to campaign for Democratic presidential nominee Michael Dukakis.

Jackson met with community leaders at Columbia Villa, a 453-unit housing project in north Portland that has been the site of escalating gang violence and drug dealing.

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Jackson planned to address a rally at Portland State University and conduct a news conference later in the day.

The trip is Jackson's first to Oregon since the May primary, when he received 38 percent of the vote to Dukakis' 55 percent. Jackson won nine states, plus the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands in primary elections.

At the Democratic National Convention, Jackson pledged to help in Dukakis' election effort.

Grapes near harvest

YAKIMA, Wash. (AP) — Warm October weather is putting the finishing touches on a vintage 1988 wine grape crop as the harvest moves to conclusion, winemakers say.

The crush is on at 78 wineries, as the nation's number two producer of premium wines begins the process of extracting the juice, fermenting it, then bottling it.

Unseasonably warm temperatures this month have allowed a warm, gentle ripening of the wine grapes, said Rob Griffin, winemaker for the Hogue Cellars in Prosser.

"There's lots of color in the cabernet and lots of flavor and intensity in the chardonnay," Griffin said Wednesday.

Bottling of this year's grapes could begin by December, but most of that work will occur next April through July, he said.

Nearly all of the state's wine grapes are grown in the warm, sunny and irrigated farmlands of Eastern Washington, primarily in the Yakima, Columbia

and Walla Walla valleys. There are some wineries in Western Washington, along with a few vineyards.

Industry officials say that greater storage capacity and aggressive marketing should prevent a repeat of last year's problem of surplus grapes.

Last year's record crop of 40,500 tons resulted in up to 4,000 tons of wasted grapes, primarily because expensive storage tanks were not available.

Even though this year's crop is estimated at 45,000 to 47,000 tons, they will be distributed among nine new wineries, plus sold to more out-of-state and foreign buyers, officials say.

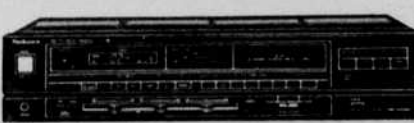
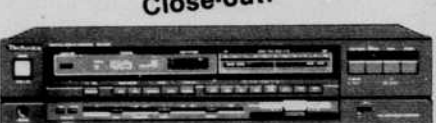
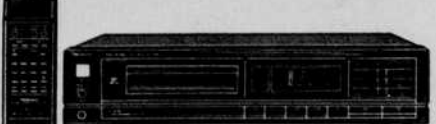
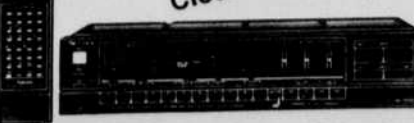
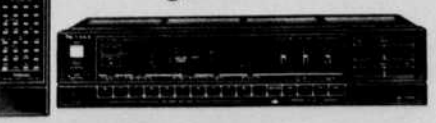
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