



Woman blames Viagra for ending marriage

1 NEW YORK — OK, so he took Viagra. But a man accused of philandering after using the impotence drug is a sickly widower whose thrice-married companion just wants his money, his lawyer said Tuesday.

"Have you ever heard of an inanimate object breaking up your marriage? You might as well name a chair," said Raoul Felder, the lawyer for Francis Bernardo, 70.

Roberta Burke, 61, has filed a \$2 million lawsuit claiming that Viagra broke up her longtime relationship with Bernardo, a retired construction executive. Sex researchers have said the allegations demonstrate the dangers for some relationships when men take Viagra and suddenly have an increased interest in sex.

Burke said in court Tuesday that before Viagra, "I was looking forward to our old age, holding hands and walking on the beach."

She said her man was impotent until he popped the tiny blue pill on May 1. They had sex for the first time in four years, said her lawyer, Dominic Barbara. Two days later, Burke says, Bernardo walked out, leaving a note boasting of his prowess.

"When he got sick, she didn't say, 'I'm leaving.' She stayed with him for all those years," Barbara said. "But when Viagra came into the marriage, he's out the door in two days."

Bishop resigns after admitting molestation

2 PALM BEACH GARDENS, Fla. — A Roman Catholic Bishop resigned Tuesday after admitting to molesting five boys in three Florida churches early on in his 40-year career as a priest.

Bishop Joseph Keith Symons, 65, left his post at the Palm Beach diocese on Monday for evaluation and treatment at an undisclosed location, said Bishop Robert N. Lynch of the St. Petersburg diocese.

His resignation — believed to be the first by a U.S. bishop for such conduct — became effective

Tuesday morning, Lynch said.

Symons issued a written statement through Lynch in which he sought prayers and forgiveness.

"I have prayed each day for these persons and their families," Symons' statement said. "It is a memory with which we have lived far too long."

The allegations surfaced five weeks ago when a now-middle aged man told church officials Symons had sexually molested him while he was a teen-age parishioner.

Lynch refused to specify where or when the abuse occurred, but said there were at least five victims in three churches — all boys, all parishioners and likely all altar boys. In at least one case, the abuse lasted several years.

Symons maintains he has not abused anyone in at least 25 years, Lynch said.

Indian prime minister advises disarmament

3 NEW DELHI, India — Insisting his nation has a right to defend itself, Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee told the world's five original nuclear powers Tuesday to get rid of their own atomic arsenals rather than preach abstinence to India.

In Geneva, the five charter members of the world's nuclear club, including the United States, joined 41 other nations in demanding that both India and Pakistan immediately stop testing nuclear arms and sign on to the global campaign to eliminate nuclear weapons.

Vajpayee called on those five nations — the United States, Britain, China, France and Russia — to get rid of their nuclear arms.

"Let us see if they heed our call," Vajpayee told 300 supporters gathered at his New Delhi home to congratulate him for India's five underground nuclear tests last month.

The tests prompted neighboring Pakistan to retaliate with what it said were six nuclear tests of its own, igniting a nuclear arms race in volatile South Asia.

Vajpayee, head of India's new Hindu nationalist-led government, noted that U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan himself had

cited a need to rethink disarmament issues.

"I want to add that the time has come not just to think, but to act as well," he said to wide applause. "There have been endless meetings, discussions and seminars on disarmament, but no steps have been taken to get rid of nuclear weapons."

Strike at Air France may affect World Cup

4 PARIS — Top brass at Air France opened talks with pilots' unions Tuesday to end a strike that threatens to ground the world's soccer teams and thousands of fans. Their goal: saving France's World Cup.

The pilots' strike, in its second day, was already causing scheduling nightmares for teams preparing for the World Cup soccer championship, which starts June 10.

The president of the state-owned airline, Jean-Cyril Spinetta, was among officials who sat down Tuesday afternoon with union representatives at the company's headquarters at Charles de Gaulle airport north of Paris.

The talks ended after 5 1/2 hours and were to resume Wednesday afternoon. There was no immediate word on whether any progress was made toward ending the strike.

On Wednesday, Air France said, it would be able to fly only 17 percent of its usual long-distance flights, 30 percent of its short and medium-distance routes from Charles de Gaulle Airport, and 43 percent of its routes from Orly airport.

An Air France source, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the airline would stand firm on \$83 million in annual salary cuts, but that it could eventually drop its two-tier pay scale for new pilots.

In an interview published Tuesday, Spinetta said there was "still a lot of work to do" to settle the salary dispute with the pilots and suggested postponing talks until after the World Cup ends July 12.

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