

### HIV-positive Burmese women in Thailand seek safe return home

On June 9, 1992, approximately 45 Burmese women were seized from brothels in Ranong province in Thailand and transferred to various detention centers in Bangkok, where their fate is being negotiated between Thai authorities and Burmese embassy staff. Some of the women, including three who were between the ages of 14 and 21, were found to be HIV positive. Interviews with the young women revealed that the girls had been lured from their border villages by Thai nationals and were then forced to live and work as prostitutes in prisonlike conditions within Thailand. Severe human rights violations have been reported, including rapes, tortures, beatings and food deprivation.

Many of the women indicated that they wished to return to their villages and be reunited with their families but fear for their lives at the hands of the Burmese military regime. In April, it was reported that 25 HIV-positive women repatriated from Thailand were injected with cyanide by members of the internationally despised State Law and Order Restoration Council, the military regime that currently holds state power in Burma. A variety of reliable sources from within Thailand and Burma have suggested that this atrocity was not an isolated incident.

Public attention to the April atrocities led Thai authorities to declare that they would not repatriate any more HIV-positive Burmese citizens. However, the *Bangkok Post* reported on July 31, 1992, that the Burmese ambassador to Thailand met with Thailand's Prime Minister's Office officials to discuss the return home of the Burmese women. According to the article, Minister Saisuree Chutikul told the press that the Burmese women will be sent home to Burma and that the Burmese government will look after their safety.

"Given the recent cyanide injections and the deplorable rights record of the SLORC in general, it is simply not enough to trust in the 'assurances' of this notorious military regime," responded Donna Rae Palmer, Asia regional coordinator of the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission. "The Thai government should not repatriate any HIV-positive individuals without reasonable and responsible assurances that monitoring by international observers is absolutely ensured."

An Aug. 10, 1992, statement released to Asia Watch further attests to the precarious situation of Burmese women in the brothels of Ranong. Interviews revealed that some Burmese women "who were assumed to have AIDS" were removed from the area and have since "disappeared." They quoted as well a Thai government research report from December 1991 that found that nearly 50 percent of 200 women from Ranong brothels tested positive for HIV. Almost 75 percent of these women were Burmese nationals. Finally, they noted that as economic conditions in Burma continue to deteriorate at the hands of the SLORC, increasing numbers of Burmese women and children are finding themselves in this dire situation.

Julie Dorf, International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission

Howie Baggadonutz presents shows to make the OCA cringe!



**"The Lesbian USO" Returns!**  
**CAROL STEINEL**  
**SUNNY McHALE**  
**SKYEDANCER**

Fri., Oct. 30 • 8pm  
MCC, NE 24th & Broadway  
\$8.50 advance; \$10 door



From Seattle  
**DOS FALLOPIA**  
*kamikaze comedy & music from a woman's point of view*  
Sat., Nov. 7 • 8pm  
Echo Theatre, 1515 SE 37th  
\$8.50 advance; \$10 door



From San Francisco  
Transsexual Lesbian  
**KATE BORNSTEIN** in  
**"The Opposite Sex is Neither"**  
*a provocative exploration of gender*

Advance outlets  
(tix subject to service charge):  
Fred Meyer Fastixx (224-8499),  
Ladd's Editions Books

# TELL THEM



# BEFORE THEY VOTE

Portland's Coming Out Day

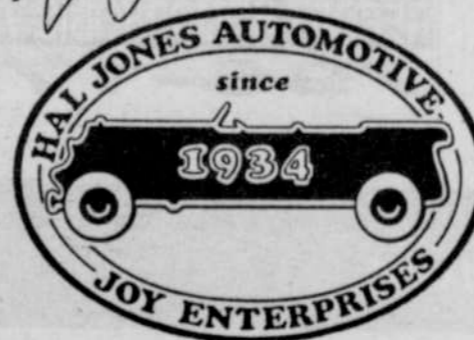
October 9, 1992 5-8 PM Pioneer Square

Authorized by No On Hate Portland Metro PAC, Box 2725, Portland, OR 97208, 503-222-9885; ID 00918

**HAL JONES AUTOMOTIVE**  
**JOY ENTERPRISES**

*Bill Joy*  
Bill Joy

*Ron Joy*  
Ron Joy



Vote no on  
discrimination.  
Vote no on 9.

5111 NE Fremont  
Portland, OR 97213

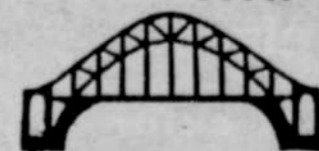
288-1130

**VOTE NO ON 9**

## High Level Performance

In today's hot market, you need a Realtor who is experienced, efficient, and quick. Whether buying or selling — I promise to put on my running shoes for you.

Scott



**Bridgetown Realty**

Scott Bottaro ■ (503) 234-1887 ■ (503) 287-9370

PORTLAND HOMOPHOBIC  
VIOLENCE  
DOCUMENTATION PROJECT

REPORT THE  
VIOLENCE.  
GET SUPPORT.

796-1703