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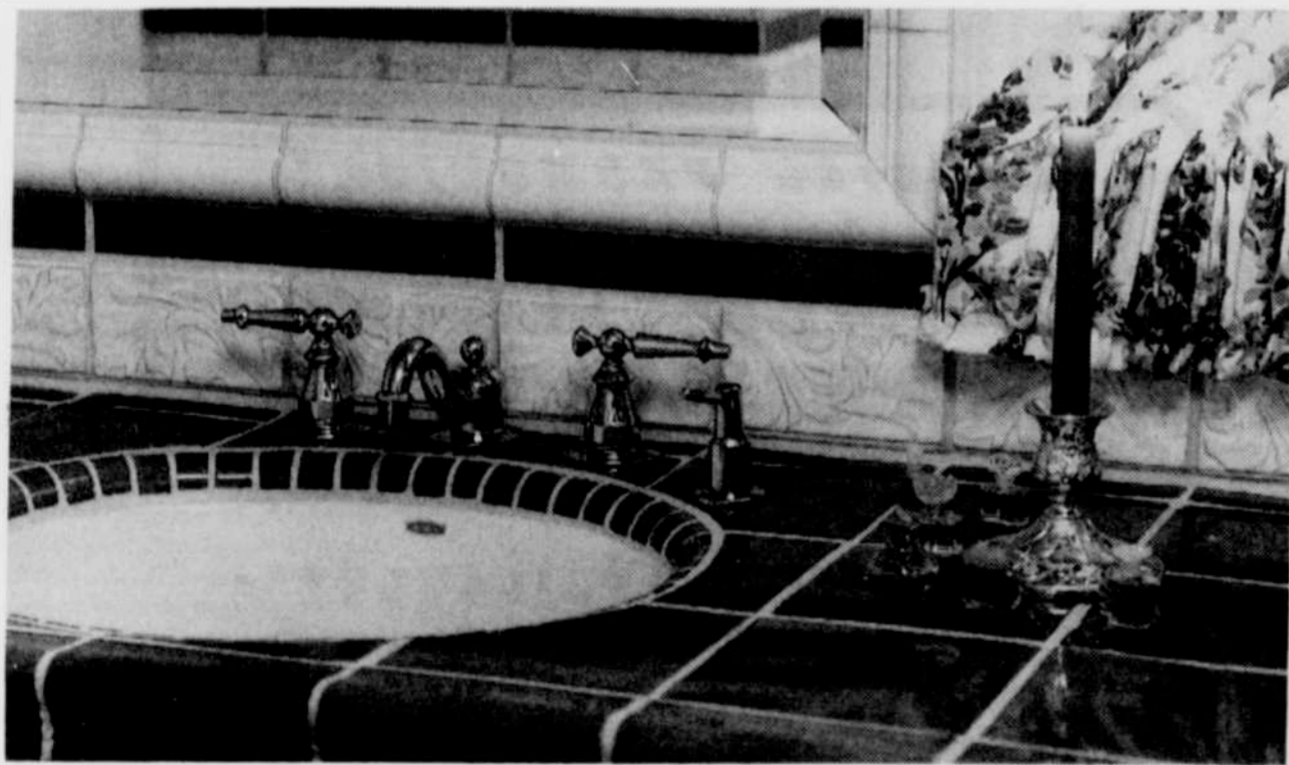
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world news

ARGENTINA

A Buenos Aires gay group has filed a criminal complaint accusing Cardinal Antonio Quarracino, leader of Argentina's Catholic Church, of inciting violence against gay men and lesbians, according to a Sept. 23 report in *The Washington Post*.

In mid-August, Quarracino said on television that gay men and lesbians should be sent to a "type of separate country" in order to "clean an ignoble stain from the face of society." He urged creation of "a large area for gays and lesbians to live in, with their own laws, their own media...even their own constitution."

Quarracino later apologized, following widespread public criticism, saying his remarks had been "a joke, something that just crossed my mind. I apologize if I offended anyone, if I hurt someone's sensitivities," he said. "I thought people had a better sense of humor."

Gays for Civil Rights director Carlos Jauregui said his organization decided to file the complaint after receiving more than 5,000 telephone calls critical of Quarracino.

AUSTRALIA

The government of the state of New South Wales, where Sydney is located, has amended its Anti-Discrimination Act to protect gay men, lesbians and people who are HIV positive.

Individuals can now lodge complaints if they receive biased treatment in the areas of employment or provision of goods and services.

"Now that we have these amendments in place, it's important to encourage people to use them when necessary," AIDS Council of New South Wales President Peter Grogan told the *Melbourne Star Observer*.

BRAZIL

Gay activist Claudio Orlando dos Santos was reportedly beaten by military police this summer, according to the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission. Dos Santos is president of the Association for the Defense of Homosexual Rights in Florianopolis, in the state of Santa Catarina.

According to dos Santos, he was distributing condoms donated by state health officials when a police car pulled up, causing the transvestites he was working with to run away. Dos Santos remained and was verbally harassed and threatened with imprisonment as a result. He quickly phoned the headquarters of the military police and reported the incident. The cops then returned and kicked and beat him. He was handcuffed and taken to a police station where he was beaten again, and his personal belongings were destroyed.

CANADA

Canadian Olympic silver medalist in boxing Marc Leduc came out on National Coming Out Day, according to the *Toronto Star*.

"I think it's very important to have people come

out more and more, so we can eventually abolish homophobia," Leduc told reporters. "One-third of all teen suicides are because of sexual orientation," he said. "That reason alone should be enough. The dreams of our young people are being taken away because of the fear and stigma. And it's about time we do something about it."

Leduc won his medal in Barcelona in 1992.



Canada's second openly gay member of Parliament, Réal Ménard, publicly announced his sexuality Sept. 27 while responding to remarks made by a homophobic MP. Ménard spoke recently to the Toronto gay newspaper *Xtra!* about his decision and the aftermath.

"If I had stayed silent it would have been, in my point of view, a sign of cowardice," Ménard said. "You have to speak out at the time, you can't speak out afterwards."

"I felt the need to defend a community that I am a part of. I cannot remain silent when the MP says someone who is homosexual engages in practices of bestiality, or is a pedophile. I could not accept that because the gay community is my community."

"One is always a bit afraid that people wouldn't understand, that they would react [negatively], but it turned out really well. It wasn't easy to say. You mustn't think, even if it turned out well, it was easy. You reveal a dimension of your personality; it's something very personal."



In the midst of a British Columbia Supreme Court case between Canadian customs and Vancouver's Little Sister's Book and Art Emporium, customs announced Sept. 29 that books containing depictions of anal sex will no longer automatically be snagged at the border.

Little Sister's was not appeased.

"We can't lose sight of what the real issues are," said shop manager Janine Fuller. "Gay and lesbian bookstores across Canada have a long history of struggle with Canada Customs, and that is not simply going to disappear by removing anal penetration from a policy guideline."

In its suit, Little Sister's charges the store has been singled out for confiscation of material ordered from the United States. Attorneys plan to show customs routinely seizes titles bound for Little Sister's, while letting the same titles be delivered to mainstream shops.

Customs has grabbed hundreds of books and magazines ordered by Little Sister's and has sometimes destroyed them as "pornography"—including such material as a biography of Noel Coward and a collection of letters between the poets Byron and Shelley.



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