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Christopher Radko *IN PERSON*



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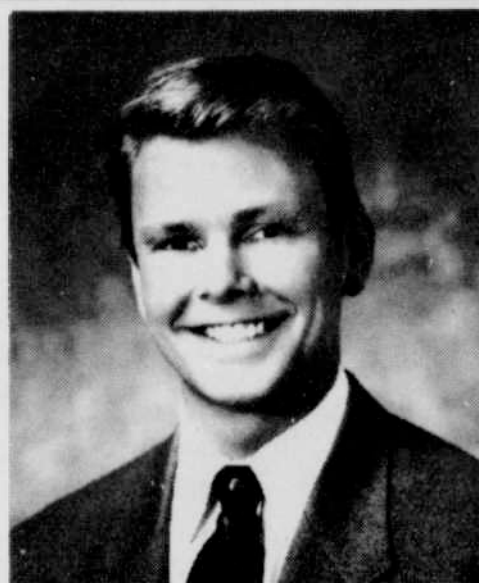
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world briefs

ARGENTINA

New laws that took effect in Buenos Aires on Oct. 10 ban discrimination based on sexual orientation and abolish the "Police Edicts" under which city cops have long been permitted to arrest people at whim and hold them overnight without filing any charges.

Apparently unhappy about the changes, the police launched an attack on gay and transgendered people in the first several days of October, according to correspondent Alejandra Sarda. Gay activism had been key to the process that eradicated the edicts.

The gay disco In Vitro was raided Oct. 1. Cross-dressing performers and customers spent over 24 hours in jail without being charged with any crime.



Twelve other transvestites were nabbed off the streets the same night and eight more on Oct. 2. Marlene, the secretary of the Argentinean Republic Transvestite and Transsexual Organization, was arrested under the edicts night after night beginning Sept. 29, Sarda reported.

A press time, gay and transgendered activists were planning a protest outside the Central Police Station.

AUSTRALIA

A couple in Surry Hills who repeatedly yelled anti-gay slurs at their neighbor must pay him \$38,500, an Equal Opportunity Tribunal ruled in September.

The decision came in the first case filed under a 1994 New South Wales state law that outlaws public statements or acts that incite hatred or extreme ridicule of gay men and lesbians.

The offending couple called their neighbor "faggot," "AIDS-ridden cunt," "bloody poofter" and "scum," according to the *Sydney Morning Herald*.

They threw oranges and dirty diapers on his balcony, threatened to break his legs, and put a note on his door that said, "You are a disgrace to society, so stick this letter where the sun doesn't shine...."

BRITAIN

The Sept. 7 arson fire that gutted the offices of Britain's leading gay newspaper, *The Pink Paper*, may not have been an anti-gay attack.

Clare Penny, a former editor of *Positive Times*, a monthly magazine for people living with HIV published in the same office, was arrested in Hackney, East London, on Sept. 18 in connection with the blaze. As of press time, however, no formal charges had been filed.

Penny worked at *Positive Times* until April. "It is generally agreed here to have been an internal community job and not a homophobic attack," a London gay leader told this reporter prior to the announcement of Penny's arrest. "Whoever did it had a set of keys. There was no forced entry."

Other sources had said they suspected that one of several fired former staffers committed the crime.

Penny quit voluntarily, however, *Pink Paper* Editor Philip Reay-Smith said in a telephone interview Sept. 28.

CANADA

Revenue Canada will now treat gay and lesbian couples the same as married heterosexuals in not taxing them on employer-paid spousal medical benefits, Canadian newspapers reported Oct. 3.

About a third of Canada's large employers

provide medical coverage to partners of lesbian and gay workers.

Revenue Canada quietly revised its policies after a June 13 Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ruling that federally regulated businesses may not withhold benefits from lesbian and gay employees' families.



Lesbian and gay families across Ontario are eligible for full benefits from municipal-government employers following an Oct. 2 ruling by the provincial Human Rights Commission, reported the *Toronto Star*.

The commission said municipal codes that define a spouse as someone of the opposite sex violate the federal Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Human Rights Code by discriminating based on sexual orientation.

COLOMBIA

Arsonists torched a Catholic AIDS hospice in Paicol on Sept. 23. No one was hurt.

Neighbors had been threatening the residents for months, claiming they were contaminating the town's water supply by bathing in the local river.

EUROPE

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on Sept. 15 on human rights in the European Union that includes a call to banish discrimination based on sexual orientation.

The resolution stated, in part: "[A]ll discrimination and/or inequality of treatment must be abolished concerning homosexuals, especially... differences that persist on the age of consent for homosexuals, and discrimination concerning the right to work, and in penal, civil, contractual, social and economic law."

PORTUGAL

Portugal's Socialist government has no intention of adding homosexuals to the list of protected minorities in Article 13 of the federal constitution, spokesman MP Nuno Baltazar Mendez told a Sept. 18 forum sponsored by the lesbian and gay group ILGA-Portugal.

ILGA



The forum was billed as Portugal's "first national debate on homosexual rights."

Baltazar claimed protecting sexual minorities from discrimination would lead to legal same-sex marriage which, he said, Portugal is not ready to accept.

Meanwhile, the government of Lisbon has given ILGA office space in the city center and Lisbon City Hall has become a sponsor of the city's first Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, scheduled for September 1997.

ROMANIA

Following an outcry from European officials, Romania's Chamber of Deputies on Sept. 25 deleted a section of an already-passed bill that would have punished private intragender sex between adults with up to three years in prison.

But they retained a section that will punish such sex that causes "public scandal" with up to five years in prison and another section that bans gay "propaganda, associations or... proselytizing" under threat of five years in jail.

The remaining proposals advance to the Senate, then to President Ion Iliescu for his signature.

An old Communist-era law currently bans all intragender sex in Romania.

Compiled by Rex Wockner