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world briefs

AUSTRALIA

A gay former diplomat is suing the Commonwealth under Australia's Sex Discrimination Act, reported Sydney's *Capital Q* newspaper.

Roger Muller, who lived openly with his lover, Michael Stock, for four years while he was first secretary at the Australian High Commission in Britain, took action after the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade denied him \$22,600 (U.S.) worth of benefits available to diplomats in heterosexual relationships.

Muller previously won a case before the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, but that finding is not binding and the government is appealing it in federal court.

BRITAIN

The foreign lover of Stonewall Immigration Group Chair Mark Watson can stay in Britain, officials said April 11.

The case marks the 19th time a foreigner has been allowed to remain in Britain because of a gay relationship with a citizen.

Brazilian Ander da Silva was forced to leave the United Kingdom in January 1994, and Watson was sentenced to six months imprisonment for forging da Silva's passport in an attempt to keep them together.

Upon his release, Watson set up the Stonewall Immigration Group and da Silva returned to the United Kingdom and applied to remain based on their long-term, committed relationship.

The Home Office refused their application in July 1995, but the rejection has now been reversed on appeal.

Gay activists scaled the walls of the London residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury on April 20 and disrupted a photo session to protest the Most Rev. George Carey's recent pronouncement that the only acceptable lifestyles for priests are heterosexual marriage or celibacy.

Carey, spiritual leader of the Anglican Church, was meeting with 16 senior clergy when the 10 OutRage! members dropped onto his lawn and activist Peter Tatchell grabbed him by the arm. A brief scuffle followed.

After about 10 minutes, Carey reportedly said: "I find your manner offensive. That is enough. I'd like you to leave my grounds."

The protesters left. The police were not called.

GERMANY

From May 17 to June 30 the Berlin Gay Museum and the Berlin Art Academy will celebrate "100 Years of the Gay Movement."

On May 17, 1897, pioneering gay activist Magnus Hirschfeld founded Berlin's first homosexual group to fight for repeal of Paragraph 175, the ban on gay sex. The exhibit will be accompanied by a daily program featuring artists and activists, organized by famed filmmaker Rosa von Praunheim.

ISRAEL

Israeli Education Minister Zevulun Hammer is standing firm on his decision to ban a program about lesbian, bisexual and gay youth from a series that runs on the educational television channel, the daily newspaper *Ha'Aretz* reported.

In a written reply to a Supreme Court appeal of the matter, Zevulun stated: "The program *Klafim P'tuchim* ignores a normative and moral approach that negates homosexual behavior and regards it as a moral flaw. The program also ignores collective values such as family and continuity, which are worthy of presentation in an educational program."

The appeal was launched by the gay group Society for the Protection of Personal Rights, the

Association for Civil Rights in Israel and KLaF, Israel's Lesbian Feminist Community.

The banned episode features gay, lesbian and bisexual youth relating their experiences and the reactions of their families and society to their sexuality.

Hammer killed the episode because it "deals with a subject under public dispute and is not balanced in terms of educational and pedagogic values."

The "potential harm" that could come from broadcasting the program is of an "exceptional severity," he said.

ITALY

Italian activists are requesting international protests against a magazine that defamed gay men.

A new ad campaign for the magazine *Il Borghese* shows purse-snatchers, people throwing rocks at cars from a highway overpass, a briefcase full of kickback money and two gay leathermen. Then an announcer says, "These sorts of folks don't read *Il Borghese*."

The magazine can be faxed at 011-39-11-66-98-880.

MEXICO

Although gay sex is legal in Mexico, Guadalajara Mayor Cesar Coll Carabias recently issued a new police code punishing "practices implying a deviant sex life" with a fine of 21 to 30 days' minimum wage or 25 to 36 hours in jail.

Mexico's minimum wage is a little over \$3 a day.

An identical fine was established for people "offending public morality or practicing obscene exhibitionism in public places."

Coll is a member of Mexico's least gay-friendly party, the National Action Party, or PAN.

ROMANIA

Homosexuals, drug abuse, "baby-murdering mothers" and "unnatural sins and debauchery" are destroying Romania, Orthodox Patriarch Teoctist said in his Orthodox Easter message.

The message was read in churches on April 27, Orthodox Easter eve.

Teoctist denounced parliament for its technical legalization of homosexuality last year. MPs lifted the nation's sodomy ban under pressure from the Council of Europe but also passed two new laws that prohibit the development of any kind of sexual minority community.

One measure—which bans gay clubs, media and most anything else gay—reads: "Propositioning or enticing a person to take part in sexual relations with a person of the same sex, as well as propaganda or association or any other acts of proselytism with the same purpose, is punishable by one to five years imprisonment."

A second law states: "Sexual intercourse between persons of the same sex, taking place in public, or producing a public scandal, is punishable by one to five years imprisonment."

Romanian law defines "public scandal" as anything two or more people find offensive.

SWEDEN

A new study by the Swedish Institute for Public Health found that one homosexual in four has been threatened or physically attacked because of his or her sexual orientation.

Two thousand gay men and lesbians were surveyed.

Haakan Andersson, chair of RFSL (Riksförbundet för Sexuellt Likaberrättigande), the national gay group, responded with a call for improved hate-crimes legislation, including the addition of sexual-orientation factors in the anti-incitement-to-hatred law.

Compiled by Rex Wockner

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