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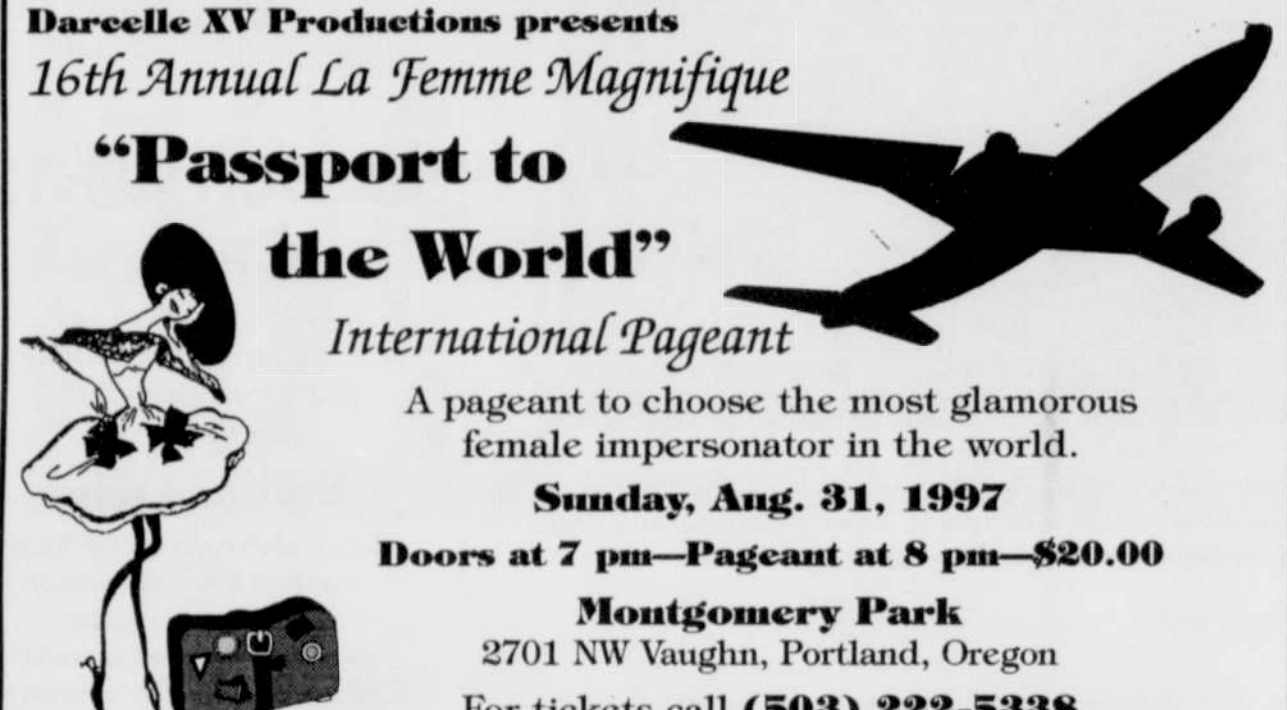
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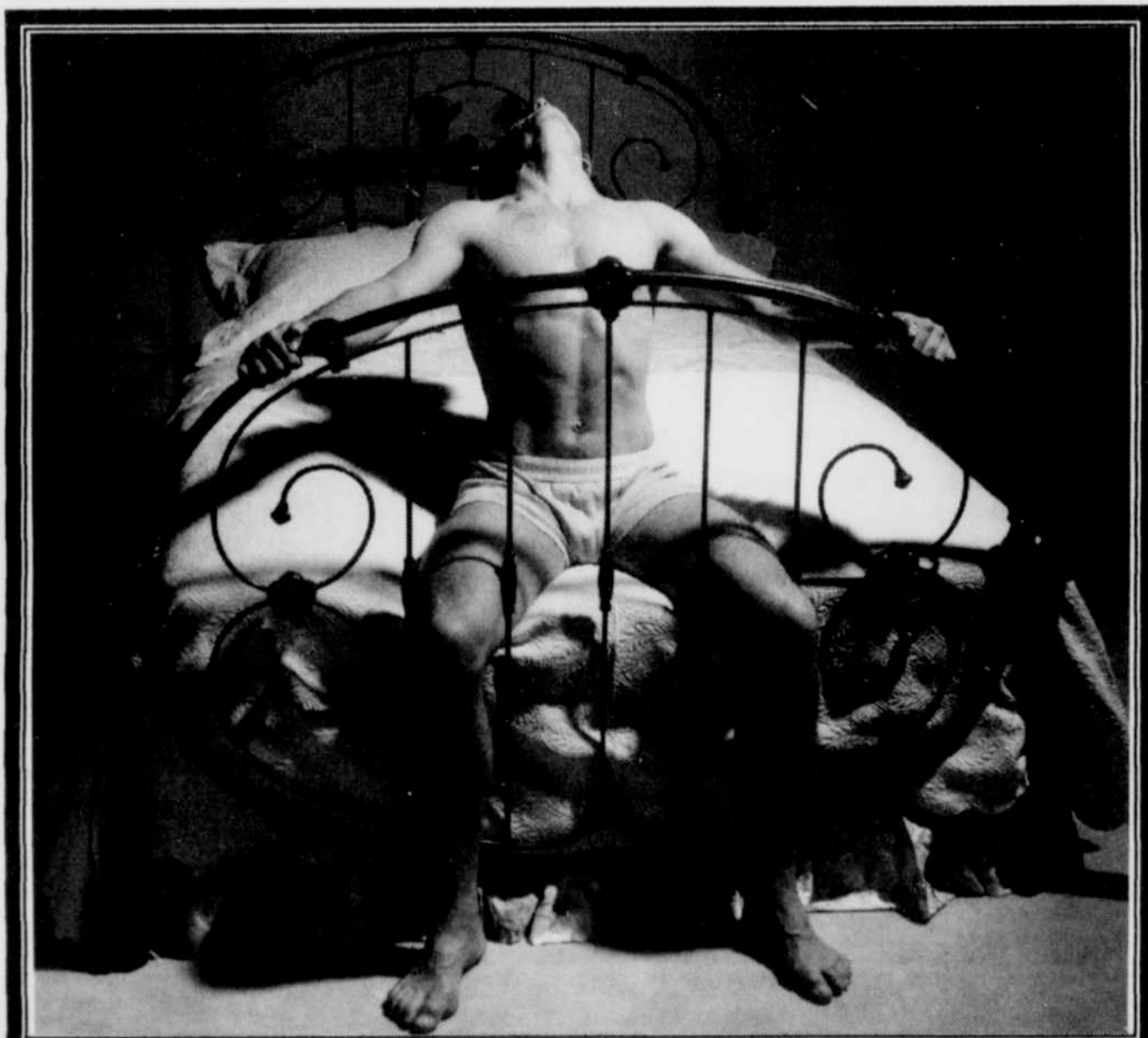
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## world briefs

### ARGENTINA

The Roman Catholic Church has lashed out at gay men after the Argentine teachers union granted health care benefits to the partner of the country's only openly gay teacher.

In a press release authored by National Bishops Conference official Rafael Nolasco, the church said teachers known to be gay should be fired, and claimed there is "scientific proof" that gay people can turn straight through psychology and spiritual guidance.

Gay teacher Rafael Freda and his partner, Eduardo Vazquez, were recognized as spouses by the teachers union several weeks ago.

Shortly thereafter, the government extended pension rights to the partners of deceased gay men and lesbians, and the flight attendants union began offering benefits to gay and lesbian employees' domestic partners.



Rafael Freda

### BRITAIN

British Airways refuses to employ people with HIV as pilots or flight attendants, reports the AIDS magazine *Positive Nation*.

The publication located three people who were denied jobs with the company solely because of their HIV status.

An airline spokesman said the policy was put in place because some countries—including the United States—deny entry to HIV-positive foreigners, and because people with HIV are not supposed to take certain vaccines that are necessary for travel to Third World countries (such as the vaccine for yellow fever).

Virgin Atlantic Airlines, on the other hand, welcomes applicants with HIV for pilot and flight-attendant positions, *Positive Nation* said.



British transsexuals won the right July 15 to sue employers for harassment and discrimination prompted by sex-reassignment surgery.

The Employment Appeal Tribunal said such bias violates the Sex Discrimination Act.

### CANADA

By a vote of 59-9, the British Columbia Legislature on July 22 changed the definition of "spouse" in the Family Relations Act to include same-sex partners.

The legislation was aimed at recognizing same-gender unions in matters of child custody, access and support.

But the effects may be more wide-ranging, giving gay and lesbian couples many of the same rights as common-law heterosexual couples.

That sits well with provincial Attorney General Ujjal Dosanjh. He's in the midst of reviewing every British Columbia law that mentions "spouse" in hopes of modifying the laws to include same-sex couples.

### EL SALVADOR

An estimated 200 people marched through San Salvador in June to celebrate Gay Pride.

The event was organized by Entre Amigos (Between Friends). A transvestite dance show followed in a central plaza.

### INTERNATIONAL

Despite financial woes, the International Lesbian and Gay Association is planning to hold its next world conference, slated for 1999, in South Africa.

At ILGA's recent conference in Cologne, Germany, it was revealed the group is so broke that it will no longer have a paid employee and may have to scale back publication of the *ILGA Bulletin*.

Board members—who come from every re-

gion of the world—also say they have no idea where the money will come from to fly themselves to the next board meeting in December in Lima, Peru.

During the Germany conference, Jordi Petit of Spain was re-elected ILGA co-chair, joined by newcomer Jennifer Wilson of Australia.

### JAPAN

Japan's Health and Welfare Ministry fired the chair of a government AIDS panel, Dr. Akira Nakajima, after he said, "From the taxpayers' point of view, using public money for AIDS treatment is like throwing money into the garbage."

Several persons with AIDS were in attendance at the meeting where Nakajima spoke.

"AIDS treatment is extremely expensive," he said. "It's your own responsibility to stop further increases."

### KAZAKHSTAN

The Kazakhstan gay and AIDS group Kontrast is seeking help from abroad in the form of newspapers, magazines, books, videos, money, medicine, vitamins, disposable syringes and condoms.

In addition to AIDS work, the group is fighting to overturn a measure that bans gay sex. It also operates Kazakhstan's only gay library.

"[Because] we also work with gays and help them, [the] militia and Security Service threaten us and [try to] prevent our activity," said the group's president, Ivan Shubitov.

Write Kontrast at PO Box 108, Almaty 480096, Kazakhstan.

Another gay group seeking foreign contact is Different from Others, headed by Nick Zapopadko. Its address is PO Box 48, Almaty 480070, Kazakhstan.

### SAN MARINO

On July 9, the San Marino Parliament voted 28-21 to repeal a law that banned "libidinous acts with persons of the same sex" under penalty of one year in jail.

San Marino is located in the mountains near Italy's northern Adriatic coast.

### SWITZERLAND

Swiss banks and companies are giving \$12 million to 60,000 needy Eastern European victims of the Nazis, including gay men and lesbians.

The institutions eventually will hand out \$190 million in compensation for having kept Nazi victims' money and profited from Nazi looting.

Some Jewish groups claim the amount owed, with interest, is closer to \$7 billion.

Nazi victims who are poor and have not received other Holocaust compensation are eligible to apply for the funds.

Gay victims can receive assistance from Beat Wagner at the Swiss gay group Pink Cross. He can be reached by phone at 011-41-1-262-4184, or by e-mail (bwagner@sntagblatt.ch).

### TURKEY

Turkish transsexual leader Demet Demir is out of jail after yet another run-in with local police.

Demir, a winner of this year's International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission award for outstanding contributions to the movement, was taken into custody by Istanbul police July 12 as she tried to stop them from beating another transsexual. Police said they were beating the woman because she was Kurdish.

Demet has filed suit over the arrest.

Compiled by Rex Wockner