

and Entertainment Licensing Authority's banning of the movie's promotional poster.

TELA ruled that the poster—which shows two women embracing, with one woman's bare back and the top of her buttocks visible—is obscene.

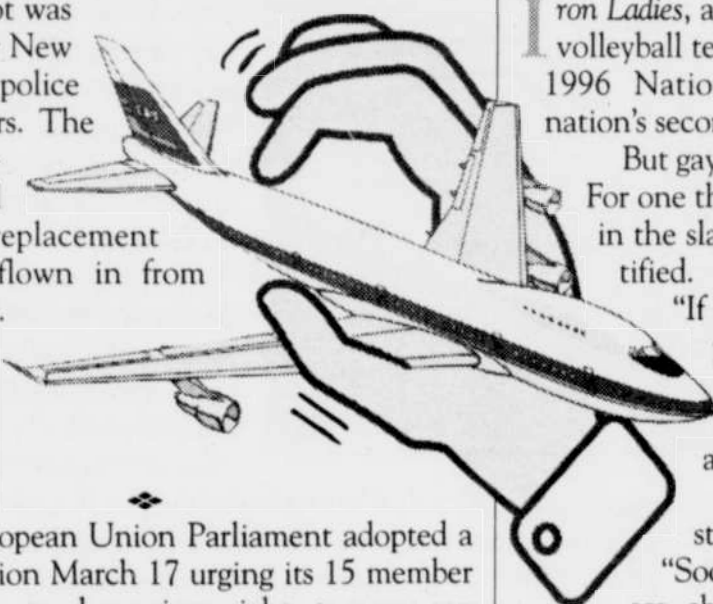
The protest took place at Cine-Art House.

Anthony Yeung Ki-man of the activist group Gaystation, told the *Hong Kong Standard*: "They have approved many posters...that depict bloodshed and indecency much more upsetting than gay and lesbian movies. But whenever they examine gay and lesbian movies, the censorship has suddenly become much tighter even though no private parts were exposed in the posters. If that's not double standards, what is?"

INTERNATIONAL

A Swissair flight from New York City to Geneva was delayed 12 hours March 23 after police arrested its captain for masturbating in a public men's room, *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* reported March 30.

The pilot was detained by New York City police for 18 hours. The plane finally departed after a replacement pilot was flown in from Switzerland.



The European Union Parliament adopted a resolution March 17 urging its 15 member nations to extend marriage rights to same-sex couples.

The vote was 265-125 with 33 abstentions.

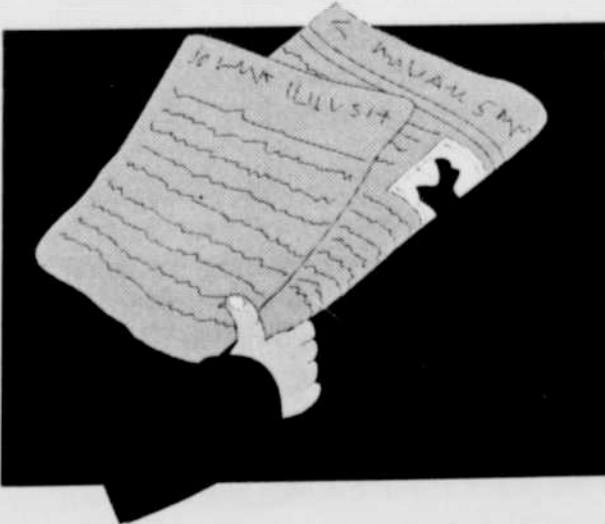
NORWAY

In mid-March, Norway's new prime minister, Jens Stoltenberg, appointed openly gay Anders Hornslien to fill the seat Stoltenberg vacated in Parliament, and then, on March 24, Stoltenberg appointed Hornslien's partner, Vidar Ovesen, to the position of deputy finance minister.

Ovesen and Hornslien are married under Norway's same-sex-partnership law, which grants more than 99 percent of the rights and obligations of matrimony.

POLAND

The country's nascent gay press breathed a sigh of relief March 27 when President Aleksander Kwasniewski vetoed a law that would have banned all pornography. The measure had passed both houses of Parliament.



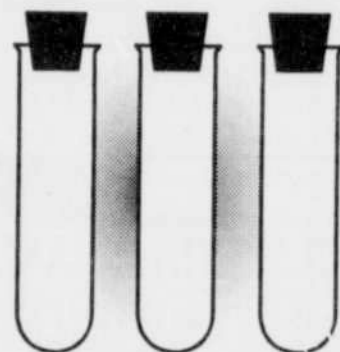
Poland's gay publications mix news and features with erotica and pornography in order to be commercially viable.

Kwasniewski said the law would have been impossible to enforce, because the Internet and satellite television transcend national borders.

It is unlikely supporters of the ban will muster enough votes in Parliament to overrule the veto.

SOUTH AFRICA

The South African Human Rights Commission struck down the nation's prohibition against gay male blood donors March 23, saying the highest risk group for HIV infection is now people in their 20s, regardless of sexual orientation.



The case stemmed from a complaint filed against the Western Province Blood Transfusion Service by Andrew Barnes, the openly gay news editor of Radio KFM in Cape Town.

THAILAND

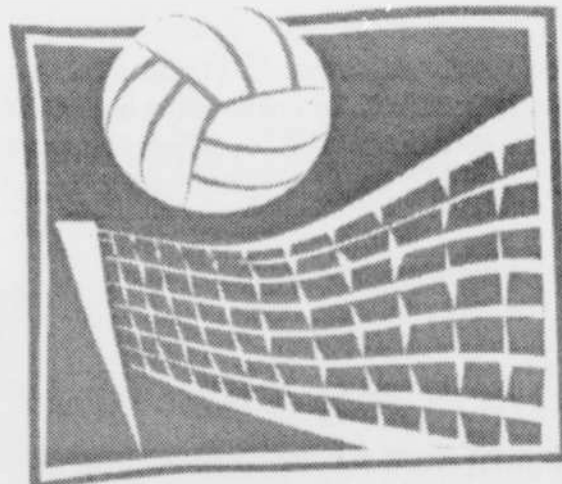
Iron Ladies, a Thai movie about a real-life gay volleyball team that won a gold medal in the 1996 National Games, has become the nation's second-highest-grossing film ever.

But gay activists are not exactly thrilled. For one thing, all but one of the key actors in the slapstick comedy are straight-identified.

"If they had cast real gay people, people would not have gone to see the movie as they do not want to support gays," said gay academic Seri Wongmontha.

The film also relies heavily on stereotypes.

"Society is changing now and gays are changing along with it," activist Pakorn Pimthon told *Agence France-Presse*. "We do not overtly express ourselves in an outrageous way anymore."



Meanwhile, the real-world team is having trouble finding sponsors for the 2002 Gay Games in Sydney, Australia.

UNITED KINGDOM

Ken Livingstone, the front-runner for London mayor, said March 30 that, if elected on May 4, he will support registration of same-sex partnerships and will withhold city business from homophobic companies.

"I will not tolerate companies which are commercially involved with the GLA [Greater London Authority] if they display any homophobia," he said.

He added: "I want gay people to have the right to register their relationships to stop discrimination. It would help to ensure that if a gay person in a relationship dies there will not be a dispute over entitlement to pension rights, for instance, because the relationship has been formally recognized."

Compiled by REX WOCKNER, who has reported for the gay press since 1985. He has a bachelor's degree in journalism from Drake University and started his career as a radio reporter.

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