

officer. He also ruled out the possibility of choosing anyone who advocates for gay rights.

"If someone is an out-of-the-closet homosexual, he's not going to be my running mate, and if someone advocates the homosexual rights agenda publicly, they're not going to be in my Cabinet," Buchanan said. "I believe that homosexuality is a disorder. It's a wrong orientation."

According to a May 4 Associated Press story, Buchanan's remarks drew some criticism from the Reform Party's national secretary, Jim Mangia.

Mangia, who is gay, said: "I think what these comments expose is that Pat Buchanan's hateful and intolerant views are in direct violation of the principles of the Reform Party. The Reform Party stands for political, economic and trade reform, and we don't believe in dividing the American people based on social issues."

**NEW YORK**

On January 1, 2001, New York will become the 42nd state to allow people to buy syringes without a prescription.

This measure, which was part of a budget package signed into law in early May, is directed at slowing the spread of HIV and AIDS, reports a May 5 Associated Press story.

A pamphlet on the proper use and disposal of

syringes and the dangers of drug use and needle sharing will be included with each syringe purchase. Also included will be an HIV hot line number.

**OHIO**

Nearly 200 gay rights demonstrators were arrested outside the United Methodist Church General Conference in Cleveland on May 10.

Arun Gandhi, grandson of Indian independence leader Mohandas Gandhi, and the Rev. Gregory Dell, a Chicago-based Methodist pastor who was suspended last year for presiding over a same-sex ceremony, were among those arrested, The Associated Press reports.

About a dozen anti-gay protesters, including notorious anti-queer crusader the Rev. Fred Phelps, shouted insults at the gay rights demonstrators.

On May 11, the General Conference voted to retain strictures against the ordination of sexual minorities and against the blessing of same-sex unions by Methodist clergy.

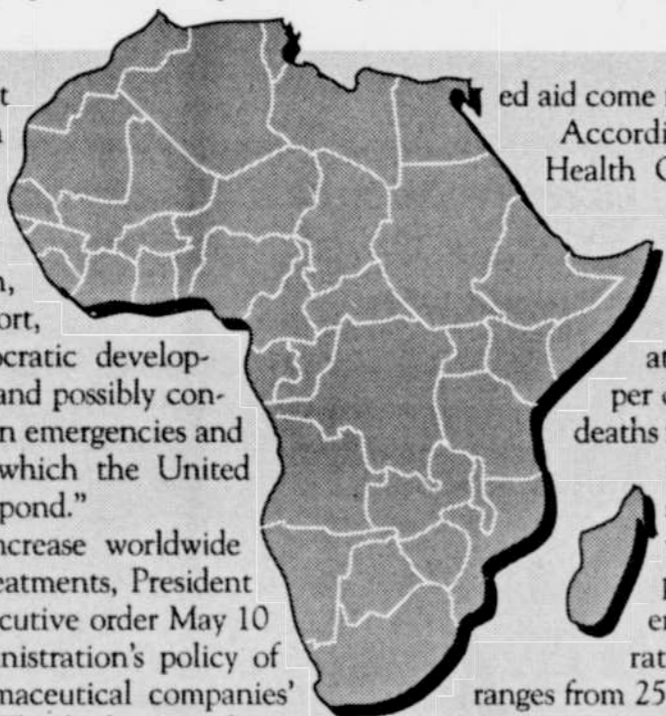
The same day, another 27 protesters, including two Methodist bishops, were arrested for disrupting the meeting.

■ *Compiled by KRISTINE CHATWOOD, a longtime Just Out contributor who lives in Portland.*

The former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe are also experiencing a rapid growth in HIV prevalence. This growth, according to the report, will "challenge democratic development and transitions and possibly contribute to humanitarian emergencies and military conflicts to which the United States may need to respond."

In an effort to increase worldwide access to anti-HIV treatments, President Clinton signed an executive order May 10 that softens the administration's policy of protecting U.S. pharmaceutical companies' intellectual property. The high cost of anti-HIV drugs make them virtually impossible for countries in Africa and other developing parts of the world to purchase. Until recently, the U.S. had opposed other countries' attempts to obtain cheaper generic versions of drugs patented by U.S. companies.

Public health agencies also want exceptions to the Foreign Assistance Act for condoms and AIDS-test kits, which can be purchased at lower cost overseas. The Foreign Assistance Act requires that all taxpayer-fund-



ed aid come from U.S. suppliers.

According to the World Health Organization, 23 million people in sub-Saharan Africa are HIV-positive. New infections are coming at approximately 5,000 per day. Of the 13 million deaths from AIDS to date, 11 million have been in sub-Saharan Africa, where HIV is spread primarily through heterosexual contact. The rate of HIV infection ranges from 25.9 percent in Zimbabwe to 10.8 percent in the Central African Republic, compared to 0.82 percent in India and 0.76 percent in the United States.

Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, in an April 30 appearance, said he does not believe AIDS is a national security threat, The Associated Press reports.

"I guess this is just the president trying to make an appeal to, you know, certain groups," Lott, R-Miss., told *Fox News Sunday*. "I don't view that as a national security threat, not to our national security interests, no."

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