

transsexuals in glittery wigs, animal rights activists, a guy in a kilt on stilts, agnostics, bikers and representative of unions and leftist political parties."

Speaking one day later to pilgrims and tourists in St. Peter's Square, Pope John Paul II called homosexuality "objectively disordered" and "contrary to the laws of nature."

ISRAEL

Israel has quietly begun allowing gay citizens' foreign partners to immigrate.

At a recent meeting of the Knesset Committee on the Status of Women, the Interior Ministry's Batya Carmon said immigration officials now treat same-sex couples as common-law spouses.

A foreign partner must present a request at the district office of the Interior Ministry along with proof of the relationship. The individual will receive



a one-year tourist permit that allows employment. After four years (during which the tourist permit is renewed annually), the individual can request temporary resident status. Several years later, he or she can seek permanent residency and, eventually, apply for citizenship.

LEBANON

The nation's first gay group has formed after Lebanese gay men found one another on the Internet.

Club Free leader "Mazen" told *Philadelphia Gay News*: "Surfing the Net has allowed us to witness a growing openness of the gay community, and now we in Lebanon wish not only to witness but participate."

The organization's 30 members are Christian, Sunni Muslim, Shiite Muslim and Jewish.

SOUTH AFRICA

The South African Police Service and the National Coalition for Gay and Lesbian Equality are teaming up to combat crime against

gays in Johannesburg's Zoo Lake and Amarentia Dam cruising areas.

Police will increase patrols at the locations and work with park officials to install new lighting. The NCGLE will launch a community-policing unit composed of gay men, lesbians and men who have sex with men.

The gay paper *Exit* called the plans "one of the most positive examples of the spirit and freedom of the new South Africa."

NCGLE Director Carrie Shelver noted: "Ten years ago police arrested men for having sex with men.

Now, in the new South Africa, the police have approached us to offer their protection.... It is a significant step forward in the realization of lesbian and gay rights."

UNITED KINGDOM

The Nazi sympathizer who bombed London's Admiral Duncan gay pub in April 1999 received six life prison sentences June 30.

The attack by David Copeland, 24, killed three people and injured 86.

In sentencing Copeland, Judge Michael Hyam said: "Anyone who has heard the facts of this case will be appalled and horrified at the atrocity of your crimes.... The public must be protected from you and assured that if you are ever released it will not be for a very long time."

Copeland received one life sentence for each murder, one for the bombing itself, and one each for two other bombings that targeted blacks and Bangladeshis.



He told the court: "I believe in what I believed in and I took that belief to the extreme. If no one remembers who you were, then you never existed. My aim was political. It was to cause a racial war in this country."

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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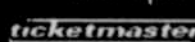


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