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WORLD news

KOREA
 Korean actor Sok-chon Hong publicly came out of the closet Sept. 21 after being outed Sept. 17 by the newspaper Daily Sports.

He quickly was fired from his job as host of the children's television show *Po Po Po* and his job on the radio sitcom *Nobody Can Deal with My Family*. A planned appearance on the television program *Sexy Night* also was canceled by the producers.

Hong, 29, is the first Korean celebrity to acknowledge being gay.

"I really tried to live properly, but I've failed," he told viewers of the TV program *Midnight Entertainment Live*. "I'm sorry. If you find that you don't like me anymore, I don't know what I'll do. I'm so emotionally worn out. I'm so sorry to the audience, who trusted me and feel betrayed."

In a later interview, Hong seemed less self-loathing.

"I came out because I didn't deceive myself, and I knew I'm not wrong," he said. "That's it. I knew I would have much disadvantage after coming out and mess up my career I have worked for, but I could not help it. Every day is a struggle after coming out. A struggle with myself and everything. I didn't mean to be a warrior, but it seems that I already am."

Several organizations have protested Hong's dismissal from the broadcast programs, including the gay men's group Chingusai, the Lesbian and Gay Human Rights Federation, the Seoul Queer Film Festival Organizing Committee, the gay magazine *Buddy*, the Sarangbang Group for Human Rights and the Citizens Network for the Cultural Revolution. "We are going to fight until the violence, discrimination, prejudices and brutal fascism of this society is stopped," they said in a statement.

BRAZIL
 The most ardent supporter of gay equality in Brazil's congress, Marta Suplicy, received the most votes in Sao Paulo's mayoral primary election Oct. 1.

She is expected to easily win the runoff Oct. 19. Suplicy, a former television personality known for her frank talk about sex, is the sponsor of a gay partnership law stalled in the Chamber of Deputies.

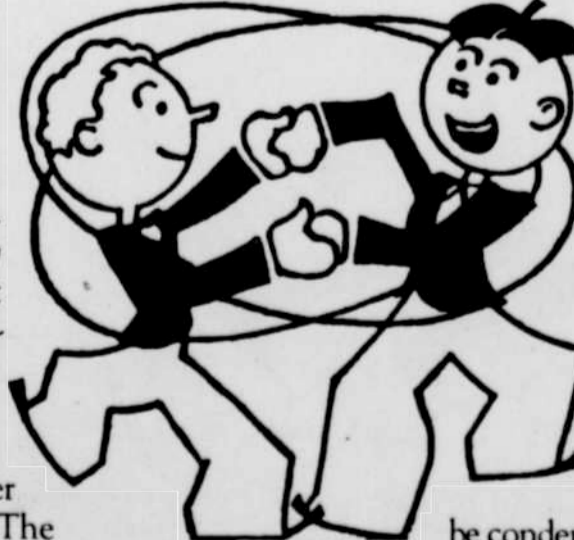
UNITED KINGDOM
 Using a free e-mail address and a free Web page, a previously unknown organization called Tories Against Hypocrisy supposedly has outed seven British Members of Parliament: Nigel Evans, Ann Widdecombe, David Ruffley, Nick Gibb, Alan Duncan, Gerald Howarth and Michael Fabricant.

It did not present any evidence for its detailed and graphic accusations and did not respond to a reporter's request for additional information. None of the politicians has commented publicly on the scandal.

The group has threatened to out numerous other high-ranking Tory officials. "Our aim is to rid the Conservative Party of hypocrisy and homophobia and to ensure that the public see us as a party of honesty, consistency and integrity," it said.

Two gay characters will marry each other on the British Broadcasting Corp. hospital drama *Casualty* on Oct. 14 and 15. It will be the first gay wedding shown on U.K. television.

HIV-positive nurse Adam will wed his dancer boyfriend, Reuben. The



characters reportedly will not appear in future episodes of the television program.

PERU
 Protesters blocked the streets of Tabalosos with trucks and boulders Oct. 5 after a Lima network reported something in the town's drinking water makes all the male residents gay.

The remote town of 14,000 is in the north-east of the country. "Our men are really manly men," one group of women protesters chanted.

Mayor Francisco Cueva has demanded a retraction and threatened a lawsuit. "It's slander," he said. "We have always been tough and hardworking."

The protesters told reporters there likely are some gay people in Tabalosos—and that's not a problem.

CANADA
 Toronto police say they have filed charges stemming from their Sept. 15 raid of a women's "Pussy Palace" night at the gay male Club Baths.

But they are not saying what the charges are. Earlier, police officials had said that bathhouse patrons were drinking alcohol in areas of the club that were not covered by the organizers' special-event liquor license and that disorderly conduct charges might be filed.

Meanwhile, gays and lesbians protesting the raid marched on police headquarters Sept. 21 chanting, "Hey hey, ho ho, Julian Fantino's got to go" and "Pussies fight back."

Fantino is Toronto's police chief. He had a bad relationship with gays in his previous job as police chief of London, Ontario.



NAMIBIA
 Home Affairs Minister Jerry Ekandjo told police officers Oct. 1 to eliminate homosexuals.

Speaking to 700 new graduates of the police academy in northern Ondangwa, he said: "We must make sure we eliminate them from the face of Namibia. [The] constitution does not guarantee rights for gays and lesbians. Even if gays and lesbians had a gay dog, they would murder it."

The gay group Rainbow Project responded by urging the government "to publicly reject" Ekandjo's statements. Deputy Home Affairs Minister Jeremiah Nambinga has expressed similar sentiments.

"Homosexuality is evil," he said last year. "Homosexuality is anti-social and should not only be condemned but should also be legislated against. Homosexuals are patients of psychological and biological deviations."

Namibian President Sam Nujoma has said: "Those who are practicing homosexuality in Namibia are destroying the nation.... Homosexuals must be condemned and rejected in our society."