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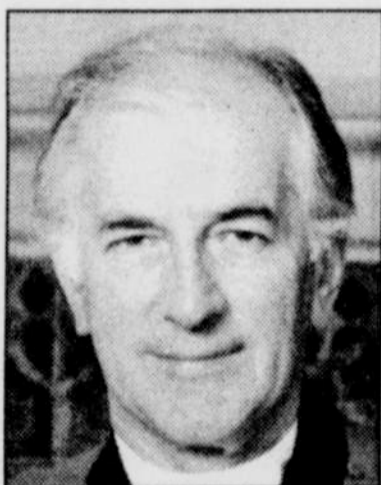
was wrong to withhold teaching certification from graduates of the fundamentalist Christian Trinity Western University.

The college had determined that graduates of the school were unfit to teach because it indoctrinates students to be anti-gay. But the court said no evidence indicates university alumni actually discriminate against sexual minorities once they begin teaching.

"In considering the religious precepts of TWU instead of the actual impact of these beliefs on the school environment, the College of Teachers acted on the basis of irrelevant considerations," the court said. "The freedom to hold beliefs is broader than the freedom to act on them. Absent concrete evidence that training teachers at TWU fosters discrimination in the public schools of British Columbia, the freedom of individuals to adhere to certain religious beliefs while at TWU should be respected."

AUSTRALIA

Gay partners are being excluded from \$12,000 payouts to every soldier (or his surviving partner) who was held prisoner by the Japanese during World War II. "Australia doesn't consider a homosexual spouse to be a spouse," Family and Community Service Minister Amanda Vanstone said.



Archbishop Peter Carnley is reaching out to same-sex couples

The head of Australia's Anglican Church, Archbishop Peter Carnley, says Christians should accept what he called the "committed friendships" of same-sex couples.

Such acceptance, he wrote, might include allowing gay couples to have a commitment ceremony in churches, which should view gay relationships as vehicles for "love, joy, peace, forgiveness, gentleness, mutual respect, care and steadfast loyalty." Carnley said the Bible condemns promiscuity but has no clear teachings regarding gay sex itself.

KAZAKHSTAN

Police in the capital city of Almaty refused to intervene as four gay men were beaten by thugs in early May outside a gay bar, according to the Institute for War and Peace Reporting.

"Instead, they joined the attackers," the group said. "The incident is anything but unique. Beatings of gay men are as commonplace in Kazakhstan as police intervention or protection is nonexistent."

SAUDI ARABIA

Seven men had their heads chopped off May 18 in the Red Sea city of al-Kunfudah for gang-raping a man, the *Chicago Sun-Times* reported. The executions took place in public.

The men were decapitated with a sword. Saudi Arabia imposes capital punishment for murder, rape, drug trafficking and armed robbery, the *Sun-Times* said.

CYPRUS

A hairdresser who testified that he had a gay sexual relationship with Limassol Orthodox Bishop Athanasios was jailed for two years and eight months May 16 for defamation.

Christos Stangos, 33, was a key player in a drawn-out drama in which Athanasios was accused of being gay as part of an alleged plot by other bishops to keep him from becoming the church's national leader. A Major Synod—only

the second one in Cyprus' history—determined last year that Athanasios was not a practicing homosexual.

SWAZILAND

Queen LaMagwaza and the nation's health minister visited the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Center to learn about its extensive HIV prevention, testing and treatment programs May 16. As a result, the agency hopes to facilitate training of Swazi doctors at the University of Southern California's AIDS Treatment Center.

"Working together here, we are already making a bridge from America to Africa," Queen LaMagwaza told the *Los Angeles Times*. "It gives us strength to know there are people interested in helping us."

One-third of Swaziland's population is thought to be HIV-positive, and average life expectancy is expected to drop to 30 by 2010. The nation has a particularly grave problem in the area of mother-to-child transmission, officials say.

ISRAEL

During a debate over legalizing nonreligious marriages, Parliament was interrupted by gay activists protesting the exclusion of same-sex marriages from the "Freedom to Marry" campaign.

The May 21 discussion was initiated by the Coalition for Free Choice in Marriage, which consists of prominent social-change organizations working toward allowing civil marriages. But the group excluded Israel's gay rights organizations because leaders consider it impractical to take on the battle for same-sex marriage.

Lior Mencher, executive director of the Tel Aviv gay group Agudah, and Hagai El-Ad, executive director of Jerusalem's gay center, interrupted the discussion repeatedly until they were granted time to address Parliament formally. Afterward, several politicians expressed their support for gay marriage.

Only religious marriage ceremonies are recognized by the Israeli state. Civil marriages are not available to heterosexuals, either.

BELGIUM

Thousands of sexual minorities marched through central Brussels as the European Gay Pride season got under way May 5. This year's parade—the biggest yet—traveled down major thoroughfares instead of smaller streets,



Thanks to City Councilor Bruno De Lille, Brussels is bursting with Pride

thanks to the work of City Councilor Bruno De Lille, whose campaign promises included beefing up the city's Gay Pride festivities. [M]

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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