

**WORLD news**

**ISRAEL**

About 4,000 people marched in Jerusalem's first Gay Pride parade June 7, police estimated.

Some protesters turned out as well, most of them ultra-Orthodox Haredim. A few stink bombs were set off.

The city government refused to help pay for the parade but was ordered by the High Court of Justice to hang flags and balloons from lamp-posts and to provide security. "Not an agora of city money is being spent on those sickos, and the logistical support is from private donations," declared City Councilor Eli Smaheyof, Municipal Finance Committee chairman.

**SOUTH AFRICA**

Peter Marais, premier of the Western Cape province, where Cape Town is located, quit May 31 amid multiple sexual harassment charges. He claims innocence, saying white women don't understand that mixed-race people greet each other with kisses and hugs and accusing gay activists from another political party of provoking them into making the allegations to retaliate for his homophobic statements.

Two of the people pressing charges, however, are themselves biracial. Marais says he welcomes the chance to defend himself in court.

**NEW ZEALAND**

Prime Minister Helen Clark has issued a blanket apology to gay men and lesbians for the discrimination they have suffered at the hands of the government through the years.

"It's been disgraceful," she told the gay newspaper *Express*. "People have put up with the most appalling discrimination, stereotyping, people have been criminalized."

Clark offered "my personal apology...on behalf of the government."

**THE PHILIPPINES**

One of the Philippines' senior-most Catholic bishops has no problem with gay priests as long as they don't have sex. "Homosexuality as an orientation is not sinful," Sorsogon Bishop Jesus Varela said.

In the wake of the ongoing child abuse scandal, some U.S. bishops have called for a ban on gay priests even if they're celibate.

**EGYPT**

President Hosni Mubarak has annulled the convictions of 21 men sent to prison for "habitual practice of debauchery"—coded language for gay sex.

At the same time, he confirmed the convictions of two other men jailed as a result of the same anti-gay sweep. They are serving three- to five-year sentences for "contempt for religion."

Mubarak said the 21 people (and 29 others who were acquitted) should not have been tried in the Emergency State Security Court, which was set up to handle suspected terrorists. Prosecutors will determine whether any of the 50 men should be retried in regular court, he added.

The "Cairo 52" were arrested May 11, 2001, during a raid on the gay-frequented Queen Boat discotheque and on subsequent days at various locations around the city. They were jailed and tortured until



Hosni Mubarak

homosexual conduct, and new arrests have been reported regularly.

**LATVIA**

A preacher in Riga was relieved of his duties May 23 just 30 minutes after coming out on a Radio Free Europe broadcast. The Rev. Maris Sants, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Christ pastor, told listeners the church refuses to try to understand gay people.

"I am only sorry for my congregation," he said afterward. "I fear that it will suffer the greatest damage."

**GERMANY**

The Federation of German Scout Organizations and the Union of German Girl Guide Associations denounced the Boy Scouts of America for its treatment of gays May 24. U.S. policy states that "an avowed homosexual cannot serve as a role model for the traditional values espoused in the Scout Oath and Law."

**UNITED KINGDOM**

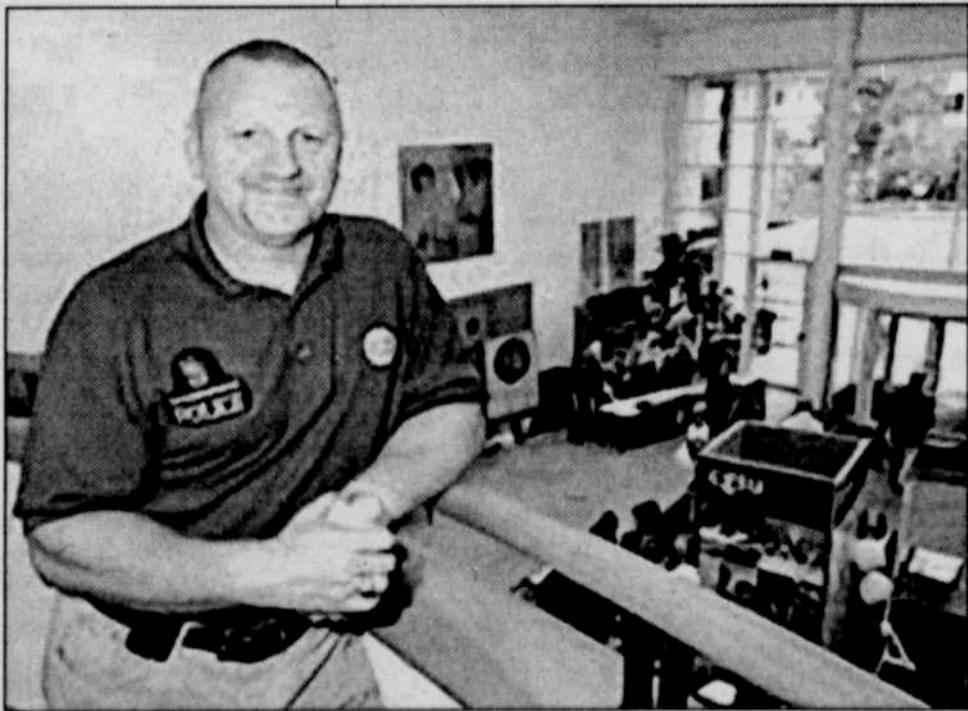
Home Secretary David Blunkett approved funding May 27 for the national Lesbian and Gay Police Association.

Britain has 650 openly gay cops. Another 15,000 officers are not openly gay, the association estimates.

"Funding was granted because LAGPA were able to show that they are contributing to the home secretary's aims for the police service," the Home Office said. "This funding will enable LAGPA to operate on an equal footing with other minority staff associations such as the National Black Police Association and the British Association of Women Police."

The group will lobby for pension rights for same-sex couples and arrange events to support openly gay cops, leaders said. [E]

*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.*



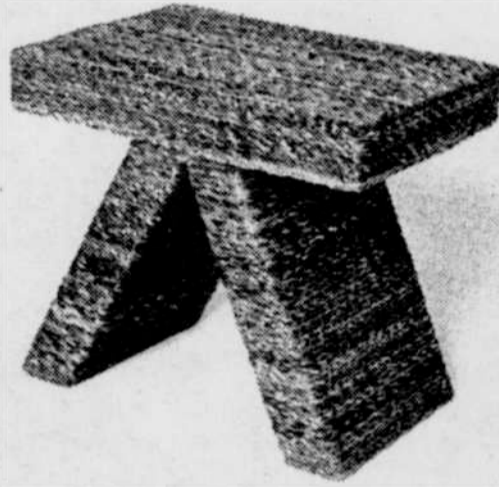
The British government has OK'd funding for the national Lesbian and Gay Police Association

their trial in November.

Human rights activists, including Amnesty International, denounced the charges as fabricated and accused Egyptian authorities of mounting an anti-gay witch hunt. Since November, Egypt reportedly has imprisoned scores of other men for alleged

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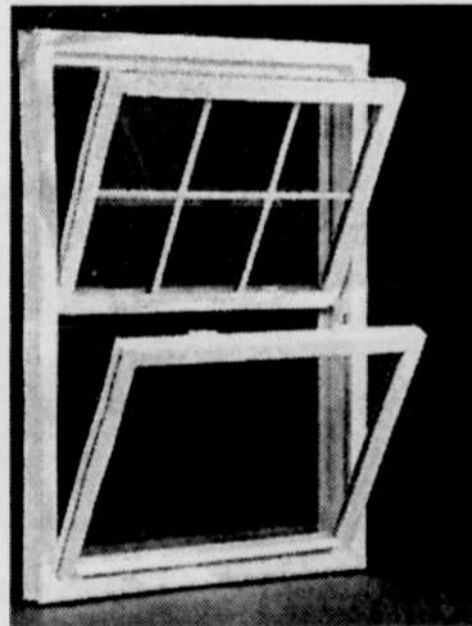
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