

# WORLD news

have taken a large step in the constant struggle to have our relationships recognized as equal to heterosexual Canadians."

The Gay Pride parade in Ottawa had a new twist July 13—legally married same-sex couples. About 10,000 spectators cheered the newlyweds.

Ontario's highest court forced legalization of same-sex marriage June 10. British Columbia's highest court followed suit July 8. The federal government has thrown in the towel and is in the process of legalizing full same-sex marriage nationwide.

The city of Ottawa's float was one of the parade's largest. It displayed a huge banner that read, "Sex in the City: Don't Forget to Wrap It Up." City workers distributed condoms to spectators as the float moved along.



Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong (right, with U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld) has started appointing queers to fill sensitive government positions

## AUSTRALIA

Delegates to the national convention of Australia's third-largest religious denomination, the Uniting Church, voted July 17 to allow ordination of gay ministers who are sexually active.

About 75 percent of the delegates favored the policy change, following two days of heated debate. Conservatives said the decision will lead to a mass exodus from the 300,000-member church.

The Uniting Church was formed in 1977 through the merger of the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational churches. About 1.3 million Australians claim an association with the denomination.

## SWEDEN

An HIV-positive Swedish man who had unprotected sex with nine men without revealing his status was sent to prison for four years July 18.

The 27-year-old was convicted of attempted aggravated assault and ordered to pay about \$75,000 to his casual and long-term sex partners. None of them contracted HIV.

The man claimed he thought he was unable to transmit the virus because treatment had made his viral load undetectable. Swedish law requires HIV carriers to inform sexual partners of their condition prior to having sex.

## SINGAPORE

Singapore has quietly begun welcoming gays into government jobs, including those considered the most sensitive, Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong told *Time* magazine June 30.

He said the policy change was inspired in part by a desire not to exclude talented gay foreigners from immigrating. But the move is not being trumpeted in order to keep from alarming conservatives.

"Let it evolve, and in time the population will understand that some people are born that way," Goh said. "We are born this way and they are born that way, but they are like you and me."

## HUNGARY

About 4,000 people marched in Budapest's Gay Pride parade July 6. Police wearing riot gear protected the marchers from neo-Nazis "who formed a marauding throng at the base of Erzsébet híd" bridge, *The Budapest Sun* said.

Mayor Gábor Demszky attended the Pride launch event the previous evening at the Művész Cinema complex. He described Budapest as a beacon of tolerance and fraternity.

## NEW ZEALAND

New Zealand's government is preparing a civil union bill under which gay and straight couples will be able to register their relationships and obtain matrimonial rights.

Some activists have welcomed the bill, while others have denounced it as a half-measure that

deprives gays of equal access to marriage. Additional bills will rework more than 100 laws that discriminate against same-sex couples, officials said.

New Zealand's Parliament legalized prostitution June 25 by a vote of 60-59.

The law came into force in early July. Licensed brothels will operate under public health and employment laws.

The author of the repeal legislation, gay MP Tim Barnett, called the prostitution ban "the last significant vestige of Victorian moral law [in] the New Zealand statute book." More than half of the 354 New Zealanders arrested for prostitution in the past five years were men.



Tim Barnett

## JAPAN

Japan's House of Representatives unanimously passed a law July 10 that will allow certain transsexuals to change their gender in all-important "family registry" documents. The measure will take effect in one year.

According to *The Japan Times*, the law permits people to change their registration if they have been diagnosed by two doctors as having a different psychological makeup from their biological sex and a desire to live as the opposite gender physically and socially. Applicants must be single and childless and no longer have functioning reproductive organs due to sex-change surgery.

The documentation change will eliminate problems that transsexuals face in such matters as voting and filling out job applications, the *Times* said.

## FRANCE

Former film actress and sex symbol Brigitte Bardot says she's not anti-gay despite inflammatory statements in her new book.

"Apart from my husband—who maybe will cross over one day as well—I am entirely surrounded by homos," the 68-year-old told the French gay magazine *Tribune* July 11. "Homosexuals are for me human beings like any other with their qualities and their faults. I count some of them as my best friends."

Bardot angered some gays with a passage in her new book, *A Cry in the Silence*. It said, "They jiggle their bottoms, put their little fingers in the air and with their little castrato voices moan about what those ghostly heteros put them through." □

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.

## Northwest Electrolysis



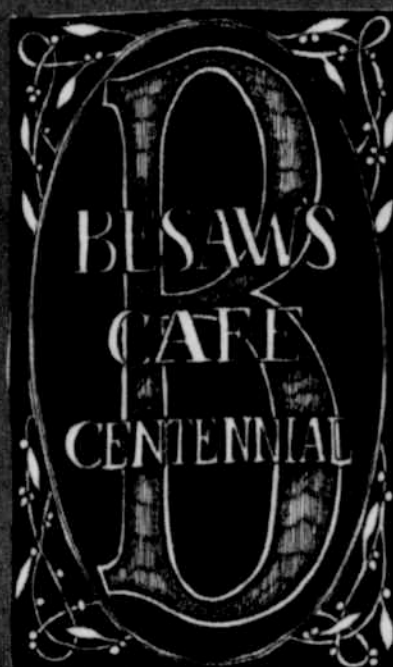
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