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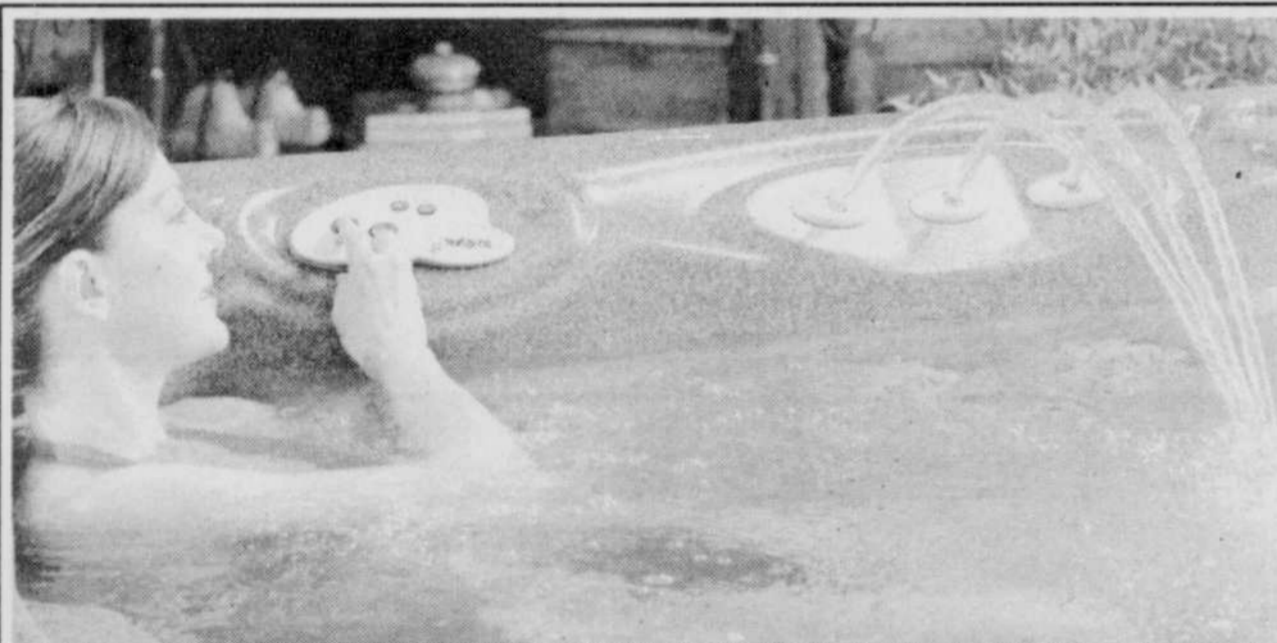
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**WORLD news**



A supporter of former Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim protests his imprisonment near Kuala Lumpur in January

**MALAYSIA**

Former Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, jailed for nine years in 2000 for engaging in same-sex sodomy, was released from prison Sept. 2 after the Federal Court ruled the evidence against him had been unreliable.

He has maintained that the charges were bogus and that he was framed because then Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad feared Anwar was scheming to replace him. The maximum punishment for having gay sex in Malaysia is 20 years in jail and a flogging.

**NEW ZEALAND**

The first candidate fielded by New Zealand's new fundamentalist Christian Destiny Party will attempt to unseat openly gay Member of Parliament Tim Barnett.

Bone Marrow Transplant Trust CEO Allison Nicol will challenge him in the liberal Christchurch Central electorate. Barnett says he's not going to lose any sleep over the effort.



Tim Barnett

**THE VATICAN**

Pope John Paul II lashed out at same-sex unions again Sept. 4.

Speaking to Canada's new ambassador to the Holy See, the pope said: "The institution of marriage necessarily entails the complementarity of husbands and wives who participate in God's creative activity through the raising of children. Spouses thereby ensure the survival of society and culture, and rightly deserve specific and categorical legal recognition by the state. Any attempts to change the meaning of the word 'spouse' contradict right reason: legal guarantees, analogous to those granted to marriage, cannot be applied to unions between persons of the same sex without creating a false understanding of the nature of marriage."

**INDIA**

The Indian gay and AIDS group Naz Foundation plans to appeal a Sept. 2 ruling by the Delhi High Court that upheld the nation's ban on gay sex. The court ruled that the law

criminalizing homosexuality can be challenged only by people who have been "affected by it," not by organizations.

Government lawyers argued against legalization of gay sex on the grounds that society disapproves of it. They also said, "While the right to respect for private and family life is undisputed, interference by public authority in the interest of public safety and protection of health and morals is equally permissible."

Naz's Shaleen Rakesh told the French Press Agency news wire service: "We are not prepared to sit back and accept what the court is throwing at us. We...will file a review petition in the High Court or take the matter to the Supreme Court."

**VIETNAM**

Vietnam's top television show, *The Crime Police*, tackles homosexuality this season in a 10-episode story line. A homophobic cop with a gay brother whom he has rejected is assigned to solve three murders that took place during gay sexual encounters.

The story is adapted from the 2000 novel *A World Without Women* by Bui Anh Tan, who told reporters: "Society will have to accept reality. They cannot deny it because it already exists."



Bui Anh Tan

The cop eventually invites his still-gay brother home—an ending that the Ministry of Public Security removed from the first two editions of the book but permitted in the recent third edition. In the earlier printings, the gay brother ended up embracing a heterosexual lifestyle.

**CANADA**

Manitoba became the fifth Canadian province or territory to legalize full same-sex marriage via court order Sept. 16.

The first gay wedding took place later in the day in Winnipeg between plaintiffs Michelle Ritchot and Stephany Cholakis. "It is just so wonderful to be able to marry my beautiful Stephany," Ritchot told *The Winnipeg Sun*.

Plaintiffs Laura Fohse and Jordan Cantwell got married Sept. 18.

"Words cannot express how much this means to us as a family," Cantwell told *The Globe and Mail* newspaper. "Now our daughter will grow up knowing that her family is recognized and valued like those of her friends."

In the ruling, Court of Queen's Bench Justice Douglas Yard declared that the federal definition of marriage as the union of a man and woman violates the Canadian Constitution's Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Essentially identical rulings during the past 16 months legalized full same-sex marriage in British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec and the Yukon Territory.

"The cumulative effect and the overwhelming effect of that judicial authority is to the effect that the traditional definition of marriage is no longer constitutionally valid in view of the provisions of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms," Yard said. "The traditional definition of marriage in Manitoba is reformulated to mean a voluntary union for life of two persons at the exclusion of all others."

One of the plaintiff couples in the Manitoba lawsuit—Chris Vogel and Rich North—were the first Canadian couple to attempt to register a same-sex marriage, in 1974, after they were united in a ceremony at a Unitarian church. A court declared that marriage invalid.

The next province expected to legalize same-sex marriage is Nova Scotia, where a court case is advancing. The jurisdictions where