

WORLD news

It's unclear what else might follow from the decision to treat the couple as married. Only one Brazilian state, Rio Grande do Sul, offers same-sex civil unions, which the federal social security system has recognized.

UGANDA

Uganda's Broadcasting Council fined Radio Simba \$1,058 for letting homosexuals appear on a talk show, Kampala's *The Monitor* reported Oct. 3.

The council said Radio Simba violated the Electronic Media Act's ban on broadcasts that are contrary to public morality and the Penal Code's ban on homosexuality. The station was forced to apologize for the gay broadcast, over the air and via print media.

"We are a God-fearing country, and homosexuality is illegal in Uganda," Information Minister Nsaba Buturo said. "When you have an audience and you are in effect encouraging others to be homosexual, it causes a great deal of distress to the whole country."

No charges were brought against the gays who appeared on the program, reports said.

CZECH REPUBLIC

The Czech Republic Parliament will again consider a same-sex registered partnership bill in the coming weeks, Radio Prague reported Oct. 4.

Since the last attempt to enact partnership registration, public opinion has shifted to favor recognition of same-sex unions, the report said. The proposal would grant registered couples most marriage rights but withhold adoption rights.

CANADA

Toronto Police Chief Julian Fantino appeared on the cover of last month's *Fab*, a Toronto gay magazine, surrounded by models dressed as the pop group the Village People.

"The Village People—that's such a police icon, and at the same time it's rooted in gay culture," *Fab* editor Mitchel Raphael told the *Globe and Mail* newspaper. "The chief said: 'Oh, the Village People. My wife dances to the 'Y.M.C.A.' I think when he made the association that the Village People are so mainstream and that it would be something meaningful to the gay community, he said that's great."

Fantino arrived at his Toronto job with anti-gay baggage from his days as police chief of London, Ontario, where he created an anti-pedophilia task force that mainstream gay activists denounced as "a gay witch hunt."

A gay man who was called a "fifi" by a car salesman in Sorel, Quebec, was awarded \$800 by the provincial Human Rights Tribunal on Oct. 11.

The tribunal said salesman Marcel Bardier at the Roger Poirier Automobile dealership used "hurtful and vexatious terms." Judge Michèle Pauzé wrote, "The use of this term wounds and adds to the disgrace and lack of respect of human dignity [of] a person, homosexuals in particular."

The auto dealership also was ordered to pay Dominique Lanthier expenses and interest. Sorel is about 42 miles northeast of Montreal.

THE NETHERLANDS

The Netherlands' Social and Cultural Planning Office thinks acceptance of gay people may be on the decline and has launched a study to look at the matter.

The office is particularly upset about the recent rejection of the gay youth magazine *Expreszo* by scores of Christian and immigrant-oriented schools.

Surveys show a majority of Dutch residents believe the magazine should be distributed to help combat anti-gay discrimination. Some school officials said they were upset about a "tolerance test" in the magazine that refers to seeing a neighbor having sex with a goat.

GERMANY

Syphilis cases increased 20 percent in Germany last year. Urban gay men are to blame. Of the 2,932 cases diagnosed in 2003, 90 percent were among men and 75 percent were among gay men.

Berlin saw the highest number of infections, followed by Hamburg, Frankfurt, Cologne and Munich. A third of the cases occurred among people who already had been cured of the disease earlier in the year.

MOROCCO

A 66-year-old British man, Kenneth Watson, was sent to jail for a year in Morocco on Oct. 4 after being caught having sex with two young men ages 16 and 18.

The 18-year-old also was jailed. The minor was released.

The sentence was handed down by a court in the southern city of Taroudant. Homosexual sex is both illegal and widely practiced in Morocco, according to reports.

ITALY

Mirko Tremaglia, the Cabinet minister for Italians who live overseas, called gays "faggots" in mid-October. "Poor Europe: The faggots are in the majority," he said after a European

Parliament committee urged that the Italian nominee for European Union justice commissioner, Rocco Buttiglione, be rejected for having called homosexuality a "sin."

In an Oct. 13 interview with *La Repubblica*, Tremaglia refused to back down.

"I called them faggots, and I repeat it," he said. "I'm a Bergamo man, and I don't go around there saying 'gays.' I say 'faggots' because that's what we call them where I'm from.... There's no point in philosophizing about it. I'm against [homosexuality], and those that aren't—well, that's their business."



Toronto Police Chief Julian Fantino is a macho man for posing on the cover of a gay magazine with Village People look-alikes



Italian Cabinet minister Mirko Tremaglia refuses to apologize for calling gays "faggots"

SOUTH AFRICA

A South African gay man is suing British Airways for about \$254,000 after flight attendants allegedly chastised him for kissing and hugging his lover as the couple awoke on a flight from Cape Town to London four years ago.

Neal Potgieter filed suit in the Cape High Court, saying two flight attendants told the couple "not to kiss each other, as doing so was offensive to the other passengers on the flight."

Heated exchanges ensued, and Potgieter later was arrested and fined about \$7,200 for refusing to tighten his seat belt prior to landing. As a result of the ordeal, he says he suffered depression and anxiety, which affected his ability to work.

TAIWAN

The city government of Taipei will not fund the Gay Pride parade. The city did fund last year's parade as well as a Gay Pride festival in 2000.

"Because the government has the responsibility to instruct the next generation that homosexual conduct is wrong, it follows that it is inappropriate to subsidize the GLBT Pride Parade event," the city reportedly said.

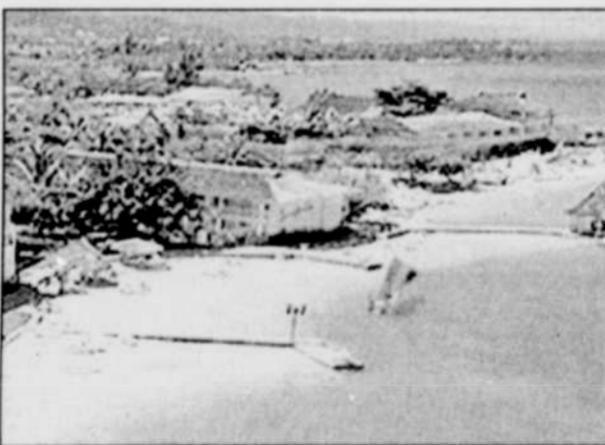
The parade will go ahead as planned Nov. 6. "Displaying our rich diversity, we will carry forth the call for a more tolerant and more progressive future for our capital city, our republic and our country," organizers said.

LEBANON

An organization in Lebanon is pushing for decriminalization of gay sex—a first in the Arab world, Middle East Online reported Oct. 19.

The group Private Liberties launched its campaign with a screening of the U.K. film *Victim*, which is credited with helping end Britain's gay sex ban in the 1960s. The movie was shown at American University in Beirut.

The activists say Article 534 of Lebanon's penal code, which punishes "sexual intercourse against nature" with one year in prison, violates the U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights.



The Sandals resort chain has lifted its ban on same-sex couples

CARIBBEAN

The Sandals Caribbean resorts dropped their ban on gay couples Oct. 11, London's *The Guardian* reported. The announcement came just before a spokesman for the chain was to appear on the British Broadcasting Corp. to defend the ban.

The company had been prohibited from advertising on London's subway by Mayor Ken Livingstone because of the policy. Sandals banned gays from resorts in Antigua, the Bahamas, Barbados, Cuba, Jamaica and St. Lucia, reports 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.

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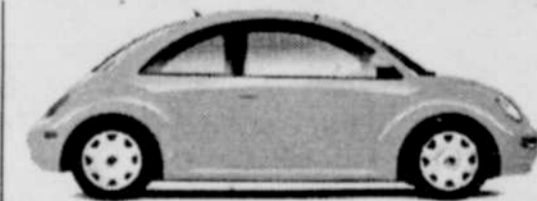
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