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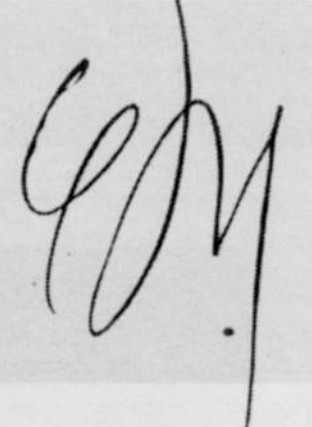
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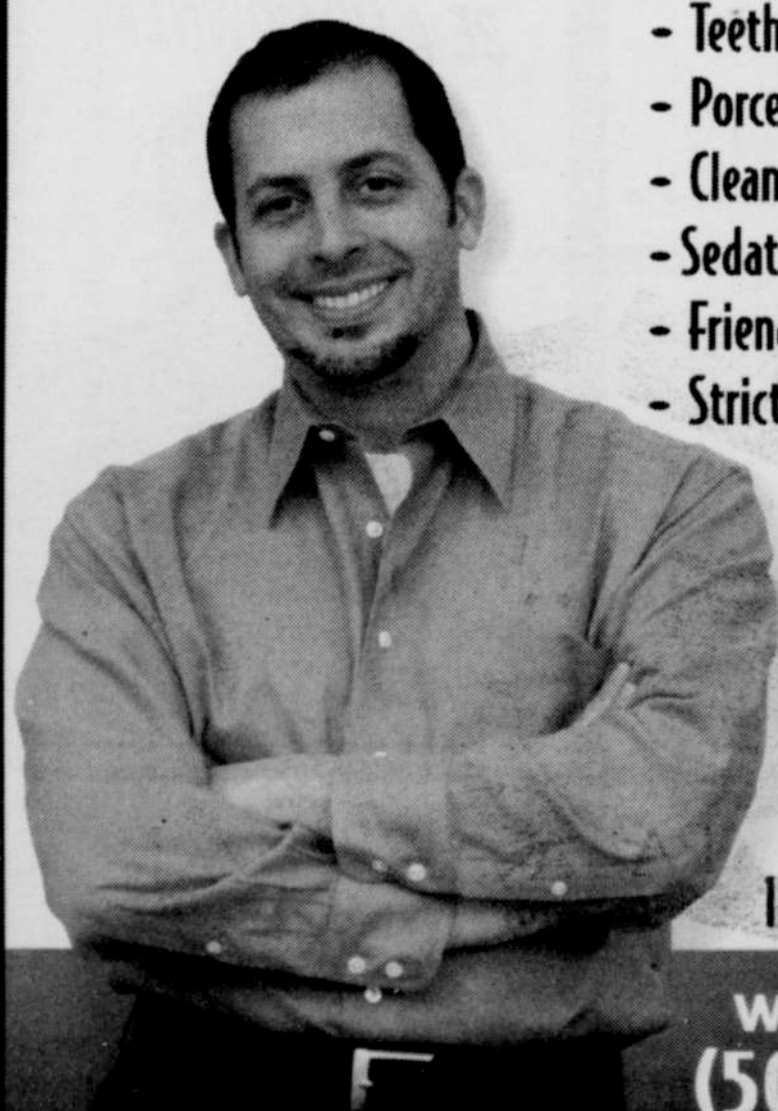
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world

EUROPE

Moscow 'Morally Cleaner'

Three days after an attempt to stage Moscow's first Gay Pride march ended in violence, injuries and arrests, Mayor Yuri Luzhkov said he blocked the May 27 demonstration because Russia is morally cleaner than other nations.

"Our way of life, our morals and our tradition—our morals are cleaner in all ways," Luzhkov told a local radio station. "The West has something to learn from us and should not race along in this mad licentiousness."

The small group of marchers was attacked repeatedly by neo-fascists, skinheads, militant Christians and riot police while attempting to lay flowers at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier near the Kremlin and stage a rally in a square across from City Hall.

In all, at least 120 people were arrested, both gays and counterprotesters. They were later released, but march organizers Nikolai Alekseev and Eugenia Debryanskaya face court appearances for staging an illegal picket.

"I am not going to attend the hearing," Alekseev said May 31. "They will probably fine me. I am not going to pay any fines and am ready to go all the way up to the European Court of Human Rights."

Police said the gay marchers and their supporters numbered around 200. About 1,000 police officers, a quarter of Moscow's force, were assigned to prevent the march from happening.

Polish Gays Win Right to Pride

In a definitive ruling May 25, Poland's Supreme Administrative Court upheld a ruling against Poznan Mayor Ryszard Grobelny, who banned last year's parade.

Gays marched anyway, and 75 of them were arrested. Courts later refused to proceed with criminal charges against them.

Other Polish officials—including President Lech Kaczynski when he was mayor of Warsaw—also have banned or attempted to ban Pride parades.

The ruling applies nationwide.

Romanian Pride Trashed by Anti-Gay Militants

Fifty-one anti-gay protesters were arrested June 3 at the Gay Pride parade in Bucharest, Romania, after they threw bottles, rocks and eggs at the marchers. Ten people were injured in the fracas.

More than 1,000 protesters—including nuns and priests carrying crosses—confronted the 500 marchers. Other homophobes tossed eggs from balconies along the parade route.

Earlier in the day, 400 supporters of the Christian organization New Right staged a so-called family values march in protest against the gay parade and in support of "normality."

Norway Welcomes Gay Iranians

Norway's immigration agency will grant automatic residency to Iranian asylum-seekers who say they are gay, the newspaper *Aftenposten* reported May 19.

Iran has a death penalty for the crime of

engaging in gay sex and apparently has used it several times in recent years. For details, see new research by the London gay organization OutRage at petertatchell.net/international/iranstatemurder.htm.

Euro Parliament Holds Anti-Homophobia Seminar

European Parliament President Josep Borrell headlined a seminar to mark the International Day Against Homophobia on May 17 at Parliament headquarters in Strasbourg, France.

May 17 is the day on which, in 1990, the World Health Organization removed homosexuality from its list of mental disorders.

British Member of the European Parliament Michael Cashman lashed out at European Union nations from the former Eastern Bloc that have rejected European standards for gay equality. "There is a worrying trend in some of the new member states where politicians encourage discrimination and persecution of homosexuals and where, in some cases, they actually endorse and call for violence," he said.

Swedish Gays and Lesbians Divorce at a Higher Rate

Same-sex couples united under Sweden's registered partnership law are divorcing at a higher rate than heterosexual couples, Radio Sweden reported May 30.

According to Statistics Sweden, 30 percent of lesbian couples and 20 percent of gay male couples have split after five years compared to 13 percent of married heterosexual couples.

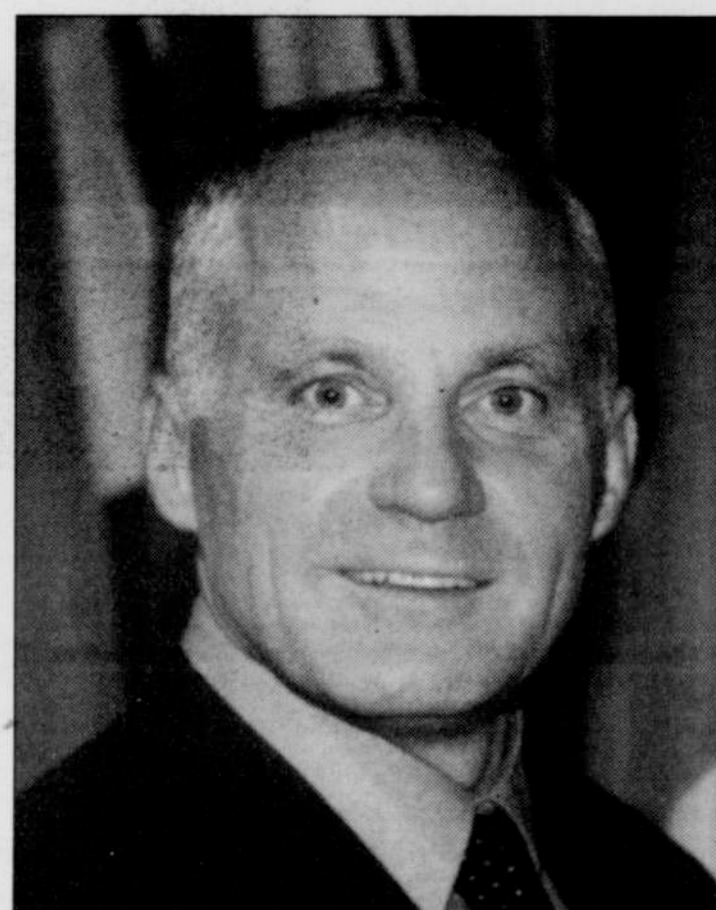
More than 3,300 same-sex couples have tied the knot in the 11 years Sweden has offered registered partnerships.

MIDEAST/AFRICA

Jerusalem Ordered to Fund Gay Activities

The Jerusalem District Court on May 29 ordered the city to fund the activities of the Jerusalem Open House for Pride and Tolerance, including the annual Gay Pride parade.

The city must give Open House \$77,566 in funding that was denied from 2003 to 2005 and



British Member of the European Parliament Michael Cashman lashed out at anti-gay nations during the International Day Against Homophobia.