



the rest of our world.....

Bradley for diversity

NEW YORK — Democratic presidential candidate Bill Bradley is making diversity a central theme of his campaign.

Although his focus is primarily on racial diversity, he also has spoken out about insensitivity to gays, among a wide array of targeted groups.

Racial harmony would be a central goal of a Bradley administration.

"When Ronald Reagan was president, everyone knew that if you wanted to please the boss, you cut taxes, increased military spending and fought communism," he said.

"If I'm president, I want one thing to be known: If you want to please the boss, one of the things you'd better show is how your department or agency has furthered tolerance and racial understanding."

Bradley recited a litany of prejudices and injustices: church bombings, incidents of people beaten or killed because they were of Chinese descent or gay, the police practice of pulling drivers over because they are members of racial minorities.

"For me, the quest for racial unity remains the defining moral issue of our time," he said.

Right DNA, wrong chromosome?

WASHINGTON — A new Canadian study has cast doubt on the most recent report suggesting existence of a gay gene.

National Cancer Institute geneticist Dean Hamer made headlines in 1993 by suggesting that one such gene resides in a region of the X chromosome, one of the microscopic structures that carry genes.

Although Hamer never identified the gene itself, his research suggested its location by finding

that 33 of 40 pairs of gay brothers shared certain genetic "markers" that heterosexual brothers didn't.

But in a report in the journal *Science*, Canadian scientists said they tried to reproduce Hamer's study and found no link.

Neurologist George Rice of the University of Western Ontario studied gay brothers from 48 families and said they were no more likely to share X-linked genetic patterns than would be determined by chance.

That doesn't mean genes don't influence homosexuality, Rice said, just that scientists should hunt elsewhere. "We are still looking," he said.

NH adopts gay parenting

CONCORD, N.H. — New Hampshire children have a new chance at adoption.

In May, state legislature repealed a law that prohibited gays and lesbians from adopting children or serving as foster parents.

The Senate voted 18-6 to repeal the 1987 law, which also requires heterosexual couples wishing to adopt or be foster parents to sign a form attesting that no adult in the household is gay.

The House had already approved the bill, and Gov. Jeanne Shaheen supported it.

The repeal leaves Florida as the only state where adoption by gays is prohibited by state law. At least two other states — Arkansas and Utah — use state agency rules to prevent gays from adopting.

Charges in London bombing

LONDON — Authorities have arrested a man they say bombed a London gay bar as well as two minority neighborhoods.

David Copeland, 22, has been charged with murder and three counts of causing explosions.

The April 30 bombing at the Admiral Duncan pub in central London killed three people and injured more than 70. The explosive went off on a busy Friday evening at the start of a holiday weekend.

The first explosion took place April 17 in Brixton, a largely Afro-Caribbean community in south London; 39 people were injured. One week later, a second attack injured seven in Brick Lane in east London, where there is a large concentration of Bangladeshis.

Prince Charles visited the scene of the pub bombing and said he wished to "show a little bit of concern and solidarity."

"The important thing is to realize that these are not just attacks on particular communities, but on all of us really," Charles told Sky News.

Setting dates in Canada

OTTAWA, Canada — The province of Ontario has six months to get its present definition of 'spouse' off the books.

Canada's Supreme Court has ruled that the current definition of a spouse as "someone of the opposite sex" is unconstitutional.

The decision could mean rewriting hundreds of laws, not only in Ontario, but in other provinces and on the federal level.

The ruling resulted from a legal battle that began when a woman discovered she couldn't sue her former partner for alimony. She succeeded in her original suit to have that section of spousal law struck down. But in 1995, the newly elected Conservative provincial government began an appeal that went all the way to the country's highest court.

Symbolic German partnerships

HAMBURG, Germany — Gay and lesbian couples have been given the right to register as long-term partners in Germany.

Seven couples in Hamburg became the first to take advantage of the new status.

The Social Democratic-led government in Hamburg approved the law in April. It allows lesbians and gay men to officially register their partnerships, but carries no legal rights or duties.

Hamburg lawmakers said although the law was mainly symbolic, they hoped it would serve as an impetus for federal action.

"Another step must now follow on the federal level in the form of legal security for same-sex partnerships," said parliament member Lutz Kretschmann.

Germany's new center-left government in Bonn has said it intends to grant some legal status to same-sex couples, but not the right to adopt children.

Bud Fight

ST. LOUIS — Anheuser-Busch Inc. is being targeted by the religious right for a relatively innocuous advertisement in a gay publication.

The ad for Bud Light in the April 22 issue of *EXP* magazine says "Be Yourself and Make It a Bud Light," and carries a tagline saying "Proud Sponsor of the St. Louis PrideFest '99." PrideFest is a gay and lesbian festival held in June.

Leaders in the gay community urged people to call Anheuser-Busch in support of the ad.

Conservative Christian leader Jerry Falwell urged his followers to call Anheuser-Busch, too, to denounce the ad.

It was enough to prompt Anheuser-Busch to set up a special hotline to take all of the calls.

"It's surprising to us that one print ad placed in select gay-oriented magazines has attracted attention," the St. Louis brewer said in a written statement. "Today's consumer is not one of a specific gender, race, geography or orientation. We appreciate and respect the views of all our customers."

If she's dyin', she's lyin'

OWENSBORO, Ky. — A Kentucky reporter fired for pretending to have cancer to conceal her AIDS has now admitted that she doesn't have AIDS, either.

Kim Stacy wrote a series of stories detailing her impending death from brain cancer. She was fired when it was discovered she didn't have brain cancer, but AIDS.

"I'm terribly sorry. I didn't think about what I was doing," she said after being fired from the newspaper. "I betrayed a lot of people and misled a lot of people, including my own friends and family."

At the time, Stacy said she pretended to have cancer to avoid the stigma attached to AIDS.

A few days later, however, she admitted that she wasn't dying at all, but had made up the story when she realized the kind of sympathy she was receiving because of her professed illness.

Shepard champions hate crimes law

WASHINGTON — Matthew Shepard's mother is helping to campaign for a federal hate crimes statute that would cover sexual orientation.

Judy Shepard gave emotional testimony to the Senate Judiciary Committee, saying it might spare other families similar suffering.

Last fall, her son Matthew, 21, was beaten into unconsciousness and tied to a fence by two men who attacked him in part because he was gay. Shepard died five days later.

Mrs. Shepard described for senators the late-night telephone call that informed her and her husband that their son had lapsed into a coma after the attack.

While conceding the bill is not a "cure-all," she said enacting it "will send the message that this senseless violence is unacceptable and un-American. It will let perpetrators of hate violence know their actions will be punished."

"If even one family can avoid getting that phone call in the middle of the night because of this legislation, then it will be worth it," she added.

The Yellow Reps of Texas?

AUSTIN, Texas — The Texas Legislature has failed to toughen its hate-crimes statute to include sexual orientation — and Gov. George W. Bush is getting a big share of the blame.

There were two unsuccessful efforts to force a vote on a proposal in the Republican-controlled state senate.

The bill — named for James Byrd Jr., the black man dragged to death behind a pickup truck in East Texas — had the backing of President Clinton and Democratic presidential candidate Bill Bradley.

It would have toughened the state's hate crimes law by increasing the criminal penalties. It would also have specifically included homosexuals for the first time.

Asked repeatedly about the bill, Bush has said only: "I will look at the bill when it makes it to my desk, if it makes it to my desk."

Sen. Rodney Ellis, a Houston Democrat, suggested that presidential politics is playing a role, with the sexual orientation provision a sticking point.

"Since our governor is a leading presidential hopeful, the eyes of the world are on Texas," Ellis said. "Everything we do now takes on national implications." ▼

Psst! There's more to read in OITM besides Dykes To Watch Out For!

No kidding!

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