

Jan. 28 in Indianapolis.

"That's the worst I've heard it in my career," Iverson told *The Philadelphia Inquirer* on Jan. 30. "They called me jailbird...waving their middle finger at me. Everything. Screaming behind the bench the whole time, and nothing was done about it. They weren't even thrown out."

Iverson said he was called a "monkey" and another epithet, but the Pacers "found no evidence that a racial slur was used" against him, team spokesman David Benner said Feb. 1. NBA executive Stu Jackson announced the fine, which cited the player for "directing profanity towards fans."

"Sunday was as bad as it's ever been in my career, but I don't think I handled it the right way," Iverson said in a statement issued by the team. "I accept the penalty from the NBA, but I hope that neither myself or any other player is ever put into a situation like that again."

Iverson's offensive comments were recorded by NBC. The 76ers beat the Pacers 86-81.

This wasn't Iverson's first brush with bigotry, either. Last October, NBA commissioner David Stern criticized him for recording a rap album featuring lyrics about how anyone with "faggot tendencies" should be "murdered in the second and first degrees."

IOWA

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is voting on whether to ban ceremonies for same-sex couples, and analysts are predicting an extremely close outcome, *The Los Angeles Times* reports Feb. 3. A total of 173 presbyteries will hold meetings across the country through mid-April to determine their stance.

Presbyweb.com, an independent news Web site based in Oskaloosa, reported that so far 40 regional presbyteries have voted against the ban, while 16 are in favor of it. However, this constitutes only one-third of the vote and represents many regions that are considered to be liberal.

The Web site already is pointing to one hopeful sign: Back in 1997, 56.7 percent of presbyteries voted to bar actively homosexual clergy and lay officers. But in the current vote, six presbyteries that favored the 1997 ban have seen the light and are voting against the ban on same-sex unions. Only six more presbyteries must switch sides for the proposal to be rejected, Presbyweb.com said.

The church has 3.6 million members. According to the denominational news office in Louisville, Ky., the issue "will be decided by a narrow margin."

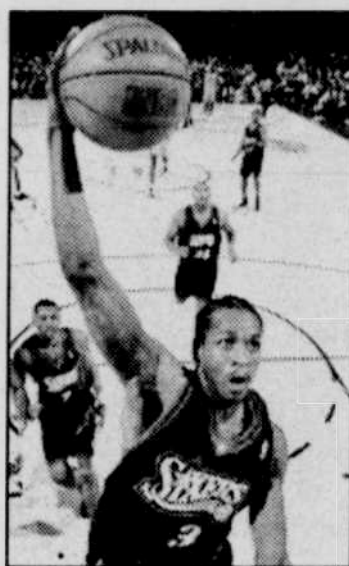
CALIFORNIA

A survey released Jan. 31 by the Judicial Council of California indicates anti-gay bias is a major problem in the court system statewide.

The 150-page report marked the first time a state has had its judiciary conduct an inquiry into sexual orientation fairness in the courts. It was authored by the council's Sexual Orientation Fairness Subcommittee, which surveyed 2,100 court users and 5,500 court employees between fall 1998 and early 1999.

Of those, responses came from 1,225 court users and 1,525 employees. The report's principal findings include:

- A total of 56 percent of les-



Allen Iverson

bian and gay respondents experienced or observed anti-gay action or comment, when sexual orientation was an issue, with those comments most frequently made by a lawyer or court employee.

- One in five court employees heard derogatory terms, ridicule, snickering or jokes about lesbian and gay men in open court, with those comments being made most frequently by judges, lawyers or court employees.

- In those instances where sexual orientation became an issue, 56 percent of gay court users did not want to state their sexual orientation and 38 percent felt threatened in court because of their sexual orientation. Also, 29 percent of them thought they were outed by someone else, while another 25 percent felt forced to state their sexual orientation against their will.

- One in five lesbian and gay court employees reported experiencing discrimination in the workplace because of their sexual orientation, compared with only 2 percent of nongay employees.

ILLINOIS

The Judicial Inquiry Board of Illinois issued an eight-count complaint Feb. 5 against a Cook County judge for allowing her anti-gay biases to interfere with adoptions sought by two lesbian families in 1999. Susan McDunn was criticized for rogue actions in what should have been routine second-parent adoption proceedings.

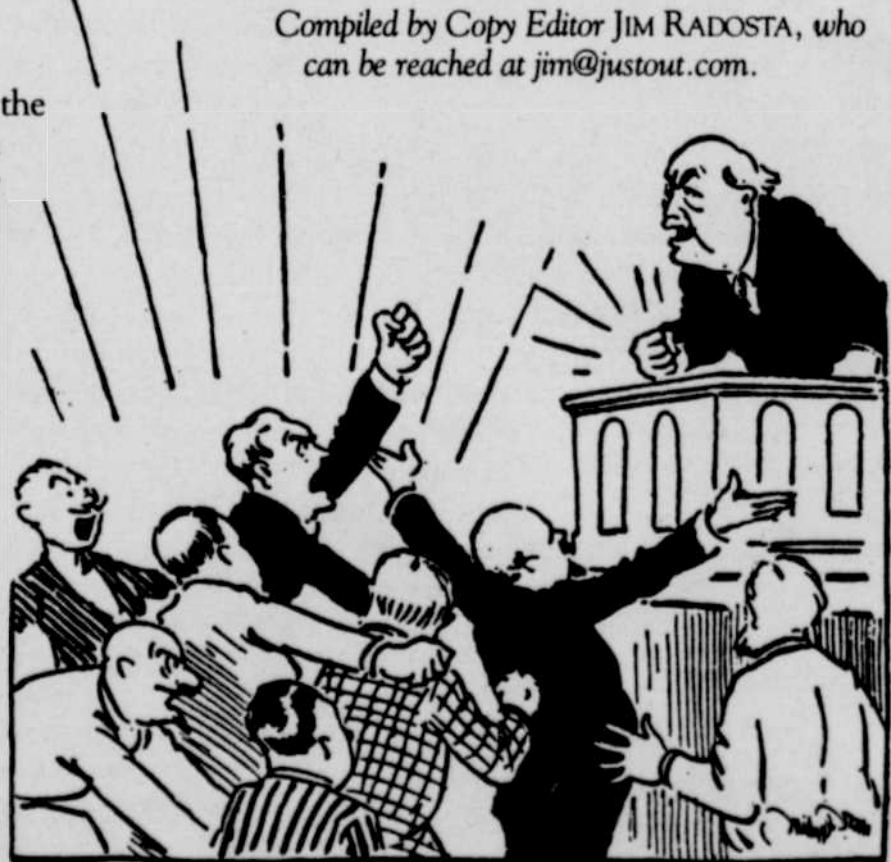
The complaint rebukes the judge for disclosing confidential court papers, including the names of the family members, to an anti-gay group based in Washington, D.C., which she tried to appoint as a "secondary guardian" to the children. McDunn also is charged with numerous violations of the Illinois Code of Judicial Conduct for delaying the adoption proceedings, improperly questioning the mothers about their sexual histories and failing to grant motions to remove her from the cases—all because of her personal bias, the board said.

In the two adoption cases, two lesbian couples separately sought to adopt their partners' biological children. Such adoptions secure a protective legal bond between both parents and their children.

Court-appointed guardians and social workers had "highly recommended" the adoptions as in the children's best interests, but McDunn ignored settled law and orders from her supervising judge, issuing orders that "astonished" the presiding judge of the adoption division. The board said she committed "conduct that is prejudicial to the administration of justice and conduct that brings the judicial office into disrepute."

The matter now moves to the Illinois Court Commission for a public hearing. McDunn faces possible sanctions ranging from reprimand to removal from office. **IN**

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