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**WORLD news**

**AUSTRALIA**

A senator who accused openly gay High Court judge Michael Kirby of using government cars to trawl for young male prostitutes resigned March 18 as Prime Minister John Howard's parliamentary secretary after a document on which his allegations were based was revealed to be fake.

Bill Heffernan had sent New South Wales state police a copy of a travel record in connection with his claims. Kirby, thought to be the world's only openly gay justice of a court of final appeal, had denounced the Liberal's charges as homophobic, false and absurd.

After the resignation, the judge said: "I accept Sen. Heffernan's apology and reach out my hand in a spirit of reconciliation. I hope that my ordeal will show the wrongs that hate of homosexuals can lead to. Out of this sorry episode, Australians should emerge with a heightened respect for the dignity of all minorities."

In asking the member of Parliament to step down, Howard commented, "I would hope that this incident does not in any way affect the performance of [Kirby's] duties, and I would point out that at no stage have I expressed any view to the effect that he is not fit to continue as a member of the High Court bench." Some Australian media reported that the fake document was given to Heffernan by the prime minister's personal driver.



Michael Kirby

Rebecca Baty, a staunch Thatcherite, underwent a sex-change operation 10 years ago. "I've always been a libertarian, and I believe Margaret Thatcher represented a classically libertarian point of view," she told reporters.

A transsexual is suing the British government before the European Court of Human Rights because she can't collect her pension at age 60 like other women.

The National Insurance agency told Christine Goodwin she is actually a man, so she will have to wait until she is 65. A former bus driver, she underwent sex reassignment surgery in 1990.

Most of the 41 member nations of the Council of Europe recognize a sex change as legally valid. Only the United Kingdom, Ireland, Andorra and Albania do not.

**CHILE**

The owner of the nation's largest soccer team, Universidad de Chile FC, says he won't allow any gay players. Rene Orozco only wants "real men who are hairy, smelly and tough."

"I don't want to get into trouble with the gays, but I must say a gay league would need different rules," he said. "You wouldn't want too much tight marking, for example."

Gay groups have picketed Orozco's office. Activist Rolando Jimenez told Ananova.com he is a "homophobic and ignorant troglodyte."

**CANADA**

A total of 15 students at Cedar Secondary School in Nanaimo, British Columbia, walked out of class March 14 in protest because officials are letting a teen-age boy who is preparing for a sex-change operation use the girl's bathroom. District superintendent Carola Lane told reporters the pupil has medical authorization to dress and live as a female.

An unnamed gay student at Monsignor John Pereyema Catholic Secondary School in Oshawa, Ontario, has been told he can't take his boyfriend to the prom because gay sex is a sin.

The teen-ager is threatening to file suit against the Durham Catholic District School Board with the Ontario Human Rights Commission, the Sun reported March 21. "I'm trying to speed up the process of equality because I'm sick of being treated like someone absent of feeling and emotion," the student wrote in an open letter to his principal.

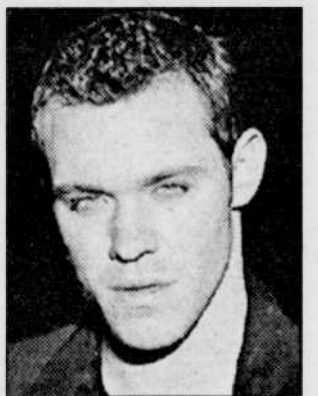
**UNITED KINGDOM**

Britain's Conservative Party is fielding a transsexual candidate for Haringey Council in the Bruce Grove ward of Tottenham, a racially diverse sector of London, ThisIsLondon.com reported March 14.

British pop music star Will Young came out March 10.

"I'm sure this will not come as a surprise to many people, although I've always been discreet and I'm not a campaigner when it comes to my sexuality," the 23-year-old told the *News of the World*. "My family and friends have known ever since I have."

Young's "Anything Is Possible"/"Evergreen" was released Feb. 25 and went straight to No. 1, becoming the fastest-selling debut single in U.K. history. In June, he will perform at Buckingham Palace with Elton John, Eric Clapton and Paul McCartney to mark Queen Elizabeth's golden jubilee.



Will Young

A court in Glasgow, Scotland, granted full parental rights and responsibilities March 7 to a gay sperm donor who fathered a lesbian couple's child.

Sheriff Laura Duncan said the women did not constitute a legal "family unit." The couple opposed the father's desire to have regular involvement in the child's life.

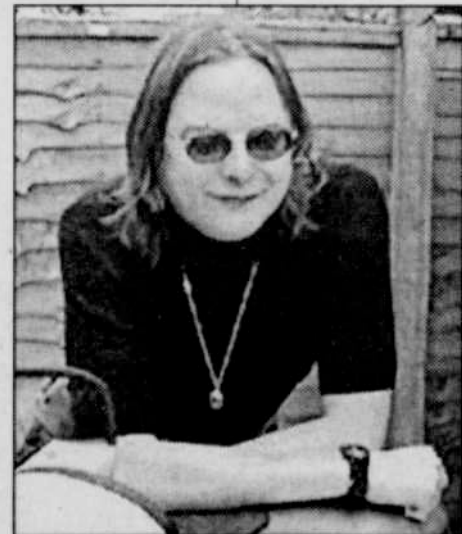
A spokesman for the Edinburgh gay lobby group Equality Network commented, "I welcome that the sheriff has made it clear that in the case of the father here, the fact that he is gay doesn't stop him from getting full parental responsibilities...but the law needs to be clarified to protect the relationship between the child and the lesbian partner of a mother."

**THE NETHERLANDS**

Parties loyal to gay Dutch political figure Pim Fortuyn, who is campaigning on an anti-immigration platform, are expected to capture the second-largest number of seats in May's elections.

A new survey indicates his allies will grab 29 of Parliament's 150 seats, more than the VVD and D66 parties, which, along with the PvdA Labor party, make up the coalition government. The opposition Christian Democrats also are forecast to win 29 seats.

Fortuyn and his followers are particularly upset about the anti-gay and conservative



Rebecca Baty