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WORLD news

NAMIBIA
President Sam Nujoma lashed out at gay men and lesbians again Aug. 16 while addressing delegates to the Namibia Public Workers Union Congress.

"In Namibia we will not allow these lesbians and gays," he said. "We fought the liberation struggle without that. We do not need it in our country. We have whites who are Namibians, but they must remember they have no right to force their culture on anyone. If they are lesbian, they can do it at home but not show it in public.

"I warn you as workers not to allow homosexuality," he continued. "Africa will be destroyed.... Namibia only has a population of 1.8 million."

Nujoma said people who become gay do not have children and thereby retard population growth.

AUSTRALIA

The vocally anti-gay head of the Roman Catholic Church in Australia, Sydney Archbishop George Pell, has been accused of having sex with a 12-year-old altar boy.

The incidents allegedly took place in 1961 when he was studying at a seminary in Melbourne. Pell denied the charges but stepped down from his post temporarily anyway.

"The allegations are false," he said. "To allege that I am... personally implicated in this evil is a smear of the most vindictive kind."

Pell has spoken out against gay rights and has refused communion to Catholic activists who regularly attend Mass wearing rainbow-colored sashes.

"The church's teaching on this matter cannot, will not, change," he said in 1998. "Although human weakness is universal and God's mercy infinite, the path to happiness and heaven for a Catholic does not lie in seeking to reinterpret what is right or wrong."

Pell also has called homosexuality "a greater health hazard than smoking."

Groups of young Australian men get drunk, then go looking for "poofers" to beat up, a new report has detailed.

"In many cases it is aggressive young men having a few drinks and then going out for the hunt, for sport, to find a few poofers to beat up—and they get carried away" and kill them, Australian Institute of Criminology director Adam Graycar told the *New Zealand Herald*. He said the anti-gay attacks are notable both for their randomness and their extreme, "frenzied" brutality, "with victims tormented and wounded repeatedly."

The report found that bashers who commit murder often are acquitted or receive significantly reduced sentences after claiming they were fighting off a sexual advance or assault. "If every woman dealt with an unwanted sexual advance in this way, there would be bodies littered all over the streets," Graycar said.

A newly elected member of Parliament, Penny Wong of South Australia, has been outed by the *Adelaide Advertiser* daily newspaper. "In Labor circles, it is also well known Senator Wong is gay, a fact she would prefer to leave as a private matter," reporter Samantha Maiden wrote.



Penny Wong

Wong refused to comment on the article. Australia's Parliament has two openly gay men.

VIETNAM

A crime novel built around a gay love affair—*A World Without Women* by Bui Anh Tam—has won Vietnam's Peace and Safety literary prize. The award is conferred jointly by the police department, the public security ministry and the Vietnam Writers Association.

CANADA

Canada's Human Rights Tribunal ordered an anti-gay Web site shut down Aug. 21 for violating laws against hate.

The site claimed gays are sexual predators who support legalization of pedophilia, practice bestiality and strive to corrupt all of society. A

Vancouver gay man filed a complaint against the site in 1999, saying it violated his rights under the nation's Charter of Rights and Freedoms.



Sydney Archbishop George Pell has been accused of having sex with a 12-year-old altar boy

British Columbia's VanCity Credit Union has become the first Canadian financial institution to court gays via mainstream daily newspapers.

One advertisement shows a male couple with their arms around each other above the caption, "I want to bank with people who value all partnerships." Additional text states, "We were among the first to implement industry-leading workplace policies that respect all families by including same-sex employee benefits, because it was the right thing to do."

VanCity, Canada's largest credit union, has received an equal number of supportive and hostile telephone calls in response to the ads, according to the *National Post*. Previous VanCity campaigns in the mainstream media targeted Chinese and indigenous Canadians.

British Columbia's Human Rights Tribunal has ordered the small city of Terrace to proclaim and advertise Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Day. The town's council had refused to do so.

Terrace, population 13,000, is 930 miles north of Vancouver. The tribunal said July 30 the City Council violated the provincial human rights code when it rejected proclamation requests from the Rainbow B.C. Coalition and the Rainbow Committee of Terrace.

The Supreme Court of British Columbia gave its blessing to a class-action lawsuit by gay couples seeking survivor benefits under the Canadian Pension Plan, the Canadian Press wire service reported Aug. 2. The judges said the case is the appropriate avenue to settle the question.

Benefits are denied to gays whose partners died before Jan. 1, 1998. Federal legislation passed in 2000 was retroactive to that date. The plaintiffs called the cutoff arbitrary.

The only gay bookstore in Quebec closed at the end of August.

Montreal's L'Androgyne had been on the scene for 29 years. Owner Bernard Rousseau blamed competition from chain stores.

"How can one compete with Costco/Price Club?" he asked the local gay magazine *Fugues*. "Not even to mention virtual bookstores such as Amazon.com, which has an excellent selection and which frequently offers its books for less than L'Androgyne can."

Rousseau also said video chains