



English Church head Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor would sooner shut down Catholic adoption agencies than abide by anti-discrimination law.

important challenge of not thereby creating the conditions within which others feel their rights have been ignored or sacrificed, or in which the dictates of personal conscience are put at risk. The rights of conscience cannot be made subject to legislation, however well meaning."

The new laws already have come into force in Northern Ireland and are scheduled to take effect in the rest of the United Kingdom in April.

AMERICAS

Canadian Gay Newspapers Stolen

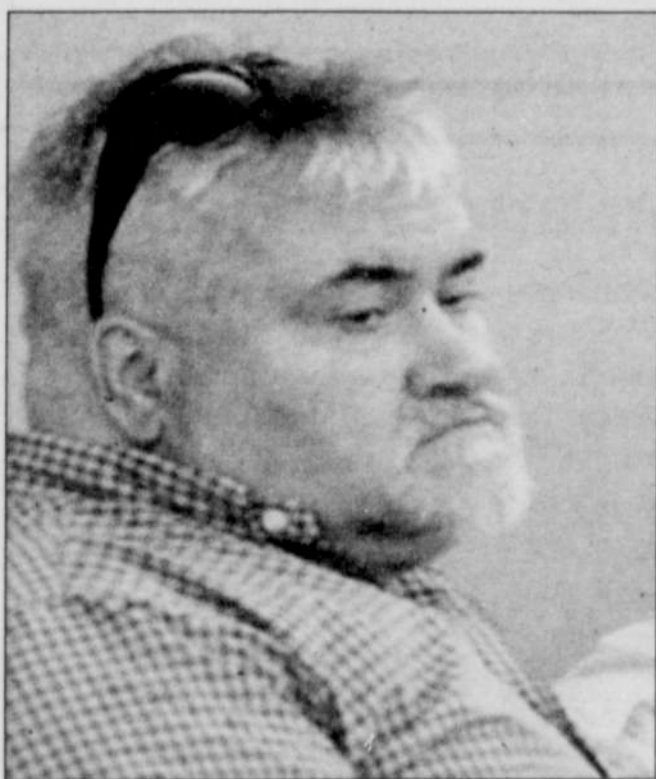
Somebody has been stealing all copies of the Ottawa gay newspaper *Capital Xtra!* from more than 30 newspaper boxes in the downtown area.

"Someone [is] so dedicated to making a point to our community that they invested the time to travel our entire downtown core and vacuum up every single paper," said managing editor Gareth Kirkby. "Someone really doesn't like us."

Pink Triangle Press, which publishes the paper, is restocking the boxes as needed and has sought help from the city's hate crimes unit.

And Kirkby has urged readers to watch out for the culprit or culprits. "We want to nab this person or persons, charge them and give them publicity that will leave even their priest blushing," he said.

Kirkby also offered to let the vandal or vandals



Gareth Kirkby, managing editor of the Canadian gay newspaper *Capital Xtra!*, offered paper thieves a guest column in the publication.

write a guest column in the paper. "We're not afraid of your opinion," he said.

MIDEAST/AFRICA

Gays Make Splash at World Forum

African gays and lesbians made an unprecedented splash at the World Social Forum in late January in Nairobi, Kenya.

"Never in Kenya's history has there been such an open and politically charged gathering of homosexual men and women," said *The Sunday Nation* newspaper.

Among other activities, queer people from around the continent set up a "Q-Spot" tent to get their message out.

According to the *Nation*, "The love that dare not speak its name" ...shouted the news of its existence in Kenya, East Africa and the world as a whole using a public address system in a tent set aside as a 'safe space.'" The tent's message, said the paper, was, "We are queer, we are here, and we are proud."

But not all attendees were happy about the gay presence.

A Ugandan lesbian who addressed the forum's closing ceremonies was heckled by some members of the audience, and when she finished speaking, a group of what the *Nation* called "dreadlocked men" chanted "fire" at her as she left the stage.

But an attendee from the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights, Lawrence Mute, said the commission supports gays and lesbians and will fight on their behalf if they are fired or kicked out of schools because of their sexuality.

Iraq Unhappy That U.N. Highlights Gay Killings

Iraq has denounced a new United Nations Assistance Mission report that mentioned the increase in anti-gay killings since Saddam Hussein was removed from power.

The Jan. 18 U.N. report said: "Armed Islamic groups and militias have been known to be particularly hostile towards homosexuals, frequently and openly engaging in violent campaigns against them. There have been a number of assassinations of homosexuals in Iraq."

"At least five homosexual males were reported to have been kidnapped from Shaab area in the first week of December by one of the main militias. The mutilated body of Amjad, one of the kidnapped, appeared in the same area after a few days. [We were] also alerted to the existence of religious courts, supervised by clerics, where homosexuals allegedly would be 'tried,' 'sentenced' to death and then executed."

"According to the Iraqi LGBT society, 26 of their members have been killed since 2003," the report stated. "Allegedly, three Fatwas would have been issued by Islamic clerics authorizing 'good Muslims' to hunt and kill homosexuals."

Iraqi spokesman Ali al-Dabbagh rejected the gay section of the report as inappropriate.

"There was information in the report that we cannot accept here in Iraq," he said. "The report, for example, spoke about the phenomenon of homosexuality and giving them their rights. Such statements are not suitable to the Iraqi society. This is rejected." **JO**

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