

The Guardian employs homophobic, racist & anti-Muslim cartoonist?

London, UK – 30 September 2020

Newspaper managing editor rejects letter of protest.

Andrzej Krauze mocked same-sex marriage as like marrying a goat

The Guardian newspaper is employing a cartoonist, Andrzej Krauze, who has been condemned for drawing allegedly homophobic, racist and anti-Muslim cartoons for the Polish right-wing press. The accusation comes from human rights defender Peter Tatchell and is backed by Polish anti-racists.

“I love the Guardian but I am surprised and distressed that it employs Andrzej Krauze as a cartoonist. He stands accused of promoting far right extremism in Poland by producing cartoons that many people construe as homophobic, racist, and anti-Muslim,” said human rights campaigner Peter Tatchell, Director of the Peter Tatchell Foundation.

Examples of Krauze’s bigoted cartoons follow below.

Mr Tatchell continued:

“The Guardian is refusing to act against Krauze. The managing editor, Sheila Pulham, responded to my complaint by saying: ‘We do not take responsibility for work that our contributors may produce for other media outlets.’

“Just because Krauze is only publishing his hateful cartoons in Poland does not absolve the Guardian of a responsibility to take a stance consistent with its values and ethics. It is aiding him financially and reputationally, which he exploits in Poland.

“The paper appears to have double standards. If Krauze was producing similar bigoted cartoons about Jewish people in the Polish press I am certain the Guardian would have no hesitation in dispensing with his services. To continue to employ him in those circumstances would be construed as collusion with anti-Semitism. The Guardian would rightly sever all ties.

“Krauze’s cartoon equating same-sex marriage to bestiality echoes the anti-Jewish cartoons published by Der Sturmer during the Nazi era. He is actively colluding with the intolerance that has fuelled Poland’s anti-LGBT+ witch-hunt, where a third of the country has been now declared a LGBT-free zone. Freedom of expression is important but not when it aids the denial of freedom to others,” added Mr Tatchell.

Krauze has been described as the “court satirist of the Polish right.” <https://natemat.pl/57793,w-polsce-rasista-w-wielkiej-brytanii-artysta-podwojne-zycie-andrzeja-krauzego-nadwornego-satyryka-polskiej-prawicy>

“I do not understand why a liberal newspaper like the Guardian still employs Krauze. I believe in redemption wherever possible. Krauze deserves to be sacked but the Guardian should give him a second chance, providing he apologises, resolves to not repeat such cartoons and, as recompense, draws some satires that challenge intolerance in Poland,” said Mr Tatchell.

According to the Polish anti-racist 'Never Again' association:

“Krauze is well known in Poland for his homophobic and xenophobic views and it is very strange that he continues to draw for (and gets published by) The Guardian.”

They report that the Guardian has rebuffed letters of protest against Krauze by Polish writers and human rights defenders, stretching back a decade.

Details below.

In Poland, Krauze is reportedly a supporter of the political right and his views allegedly often echo those of the ruling Law and Justice Party which, together with other right-wing allies, is waging a campaign against LGBT+ people and against Polish liberals, artists and intellectuals.

NOTES TO EDITORS

The following are examples of Krauze's cartoons that have been interpreted as homophobic, anti-Muslim and racist:

Homophobic cartoons

A particularly notorious cartoon by Krauze was first published in the daily Rzeczpospolita after the LGBT+ Pride march in Warsaw in 2009. Coinciding with a proposal to recognise same-sex relationships, it features two men getting married and another man talking to a goat, saying: “Let these gentlemen get married first, and then it's our turn” (for a man to marry a goat). <https://twitter.com/trzymkowski/status/1268127848268791811?lang=en>

This cartoon was interpreted as equating gay marriage with bestiality and implying that the legalisation of same-sex marriage will lead to the legalisation of zoophilia and the marriage of men and animals.

The same cartoon was tweeted on 3 June 2020 by the right-wing MP Tomasz Rzymkowski in the midst of a virulently anti-LGBT+ presidential election campaign, where the LGBT+ community was insulted, smeared and demonised by the governing Law and Justice party and the far right. <https://twitter.com/trzymkowski/status/1268127848268791811?lang=en>

Tomasz Rzymkowski is a former member of the extreme-right Nationalist Movement (RN) and now is an MP for Law and Justice, which opposes LGBT+ rights. This shows how Krauze's cartoon fuels a homophobic agenda and is exploited by and aids the far right.

Another anti-gay Krauze cartoon was published on the radical-right website polityce.pl on 18 March 2019: <https://wpolityce.pl/polityka/438441-znowu-chca-zrobic-z-nas-idiotow-oto-klasyka-iii-rp>

The caption is: “What he didn't accomplish during his membership of the PZPR [the ruling party of the communist dictatorship], he will continue by joining the LGBT ranks!” This implicitly associates LGBT+ rights with tyranny.

Some of his other perceived anti-LGBT+ cartoons were published in the right-wing weeklies Do Rzeczy and Sieci in the second half of 2018. One of them seems transphobic (at 2:49): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3kCs5jrCmY8>

The cartoon features a devil-like monster strangling a Polish citizen and the caption reads: “You are not a boy, you are not a girl, you are not it/them, you are a modern European!”

Another example is on the current website of the Polish right-wing propaganda channel PTV: <https://tygodnik.tvp.pl/34911396/komentuje-andrzej-krauze>

Cartoon no. 77 has the caption: “A crash course of LGBT for the young ones!” (says the fox to the chicken, implying that education about LGBT+ issues and people is a threat and danger to children). In this compilation, Krauze’s bio at the top of the page uses his affiliation with The Guardian to legitimise him.

Anti-Muslim cartoon

Krauze is also accused of stirring anti-Muslim prejudice.

In June 2017, in Gosc Niedzielny weekly, during an intense national debate about whether Poland should accept refugees, Krauze drew a cartoon depicting a Muslim man as a suicide bomber in the home of a seemingly frightened Polish family: <https://www.wirtualnemedial.pl/artykul/gosc-niedzielny-andrzej-krauze-skrytykowany-przez-tygodnik-powszechny-i-gazete-wyborcza-za-rysunek-o-muzulmaninie-zamachowcy-w-polsce>

His cartoon was captioned with the words: “He moved in to commit suicide with us.”

Racist cartoon

A cartoon by Krauze concerning the 2013 visit to Nigeria by the then Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk, published in the Rzeczpospolita daily, was condemned as racist by the commentator Tomasz Piątek, who wrote:

“How did Andrzej Krauze comment on the Nigerian visit? Two wild, black cannibals, each of whom has a nose decoratively pierced by a human tibia, carry the bound Prime Minister Tusk, and the latter thinks with horror: ‘We should have gone to Smolensk’ (in Poland). But never mind what he thinks. Everyone has the right to criticize the rulers, even if it is a criticism on the verge of insanity. It is unacceptable that on this occasion Krauze expressed his primitive racism, which is disgusting and offensive to Nigerians and all black people.”

The cartoon was so blatantly racist that it now appears to have been deleted to head off further criticism but without any apology by Krauze.

On 12 April 2013, this Open Letter was written to the Guardian about Krauze’s bigoted cartoons: <https://krytykapolityczna.pl/archiwum/felietony-archiwalne/tomasz-piatek/list-otwarty-do-guardiana/>

Also in 2013, on 7 July, Camera UK asked:

Why does The Guardian continue to employ a far right, homophobic cartoonist?

<https://camera-uk.org/2013/07/07/why-does-the-guardian-continue-to-employ-a-far-right-homophobic-cartoonist/>

Liberal people in Poland, the kind of people who read the Guardian in the UK, are appalled by Krauze’s open promotion of far right ideas and shocked by the way the Guardian indulges him,” said Mr Tatchell.

<https://www.petertatchellfoundation.org/the-guardian-employs-homophobic-racist-anti-muslim-cartoonist>