

The Guardian condemned for employing far-right cartoonist who compares same-sex marriage to bestiality

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The prominent LGBT+ activist Peter Tatchell has condemned The Guardian for hiring a cartoonist who once compared same-sex marriage to marrying a goat.

Andrzej Krauze is known for his “homophobic, racist and anti-Muslim” illustrations for the Polish right-wing press, and has been previously described as a “court satirist of the Polish right”.

Tatchell said he was “surprised and distressed” at the hiring choice, given that the man stands accused of promoting far-right extremism in Poland, a country currently at the centre of a vicious LGBT+ rights battle.

“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,” Tatchell said.

“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.”

Tatchell referenced a particularly notorious Krauze cartoon first published in Poland after the Pride march in Warsaw in 2009, which coincided with a proposal to recognise same-sex relationships.

The drawing features two men getting married while another man talks to a goat, saying: “Let these gentlemen get married first, and then it’s our turn.”

The same cartoon was retweeted by the right-wing MP Tomasz Rzymkowski in June this year in the midst of a virulently anti-LGBT+ presidential election campaign.

“Krauze’s cartoon equating same-sex marriage to bestiality echoes the anti-Jewish cartoons published by Der Sturmer during the Nazi era,” Tatchell said.

“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.”

Another of Krauze’s anti-gay cartoons associates LGBT+ rights with communist tyranny. It depicts an elderly gay man wearing lipstick, alongside the caption: “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!”

Yet another illustration features a devil-like monster strangling a Polish citizen, above the caption: “You are not a boy, you are not a girl, you are not it/them, you are a modern European!”

In one compilation of problematic cartoons, Krauze’s bio at the top of the page uses his affiliation with The Guardian to legitimise him.

The Polish anti-racist ‘Never Again’ association reports that the paper has rebuffed letters of protest against Krauze by Polish writers and human rights defenders, stretching back a decade.

“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,” the group said.

The Guardian has declined to take a stance on Krauze’s earlier record, saying: “We do not take responsibility for work that our contributors may produce for other media outlets.”

Krauze’s most recent cartoon was published by The Guardian today (30 September).

<https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2020/09/30/the-guardian-andrzej-krauze-cartoonist-peter-tatchell-poland-homophobia-racism-islamophobic>