

OFFICIAL STATEMENT OF OUR QUEEN MOTHER AT RALLY IN VANCOUVER

Vancouver, BC Canada

March 2008

Canadian Rally to Repeal the U.S.A.'s Anti HIV-AIDS Visitors Ban

Official Statement of City Commissioner Nicole Murray Ramirez
Executive Director, I.C.C.

Spokesperson of the International Court System of U.S.A., Canada And Mexico

Other Speakers were:

- Dr. Hedy Fry, M.P.- Member of the Canadian Parliament
- Ms. Penny Priddy, M.P.- Member of the Canadian Parliament
- Mr. Bill Siskay, M.P.- Member of the Canadian Parliament
- Ms. Helen Kennedy- Executive Director, Egale Canada, Toronto
- Martin Rooney- refused entry to the U.S.A.

Today I stand before you as a City Commissioner from the 7th largest city in the United States.

Today I stand before you as a National board member of the oldest American GLBT civil rights organization: National Gay and Lesbian Task Force headquartered in Washington D.C.

Today I stand before you as the executive director and spokesperson of the International Court System of the United States, Canada, and Mexico with chapters in 70 cities across these three nations.

Today I stand before you most importantly as an American Citizen who along other Americans are raising their voices and demanding that the travel and immigration ban that prohibits HIV positive foreign nationals, students, and tourists from entering the United States be completely repealed.

I wish to make it very clear that all my life I have been a proud and patriotic American ... but I am not proud that the United States remains one of only 13 countries among them the dictatorships of China, Libya and Saudi Arabia that have such harsh and discriminatory HIV-based restrictions.

It is very symbolic that we gather here on this day.... Palm Sunday.... The day Jesus entered the city of Jerusalem.... I say today on this Holy Day of Palm Sunday, I would

ask my fellow Christians President Bush and our U.S. Senators and members of the Congress what would Jesus say about the refusal of our government to let people living with HIV-AIDS from entering our cities... our nation?

As an American and a Christian I wish to most sincerely apologize to my Christian brother Martin Rooney for being denied entry into my country.... I wish to apologize as an American citizen to all Canadians who have been denied entry into my country....

I wish to also say to Martin Rooney that the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, the Human Rights Campaign and many other national organizations are working hard to lift this ban.

A vast majority of American public health officials support removing HIV from the list of EXCLUDABLE CONDITIONS.

We will be educating and lobbying our lawmakers to support the efforts of Republican Senator Gordon Smith of Oregon and Democratic Senator and former presidential candidate John Kerry's "HIV NON-DISCRIMINATION IN TRAVEL AND IMMIGRATION ACT" as well as U.S. Congresswoman Barbara Lee of California's Bill in the United States House of Representatives.

Indeed this is not a gay issue but a human rights issue that all Americans should embrace.

I most sincerely thank Helen Kennedy the Executive Director of Egale Canada for the flying in from Toronto for this most important event and also Dr. Hedy Fry M.P., Penny Priddy M.P., Bill Siskay M.P. all members of Parliament the House of Commons.

In closing I urge you all to lift your voices and join us in this important effort

...And I say to Martin Rooney and all others who have been refused entry to my country because of their HIV-AIDS Status that I and many other Americans will not rest... we will not ever give up the fight until this ban is lifted...and I can personally welcome Martin Rooney at the Vancouver border to my country once again... Thank you and God bless.