

## Gay debate needs disinterest

One man's liberties end where another man's liberties begin. This common-sense concept has been battered in the past weeks by the farcical displays of pseudo-theology on the part of religious fanatics. The anti-gay demonstration in front of the Lied Center reminded us all of the narrow-mindedness of certain factions of the ecclesiastic movement.

Keeping in mind that the individual right of privacy is sacred and inviolable, it is a moral duty for all of us to remove any trace of prejudice based on sexual preference. These premises are an absolute must for any individual.

My focus, however, is shifted toward those aspects of gay/lesbian militancy that trespass the boundaries of pure political activism and violently attack the intimate values of some citizens. The critique of the opposition's values is part of politics, as should be the respect for personal beliefs. Unfortunately, some segments of the gay/lesbian movement have opted to aggressively challenge the system through open provocation. One example of this is the explicit graffiti etched around campus during Coming Out Day; it did nothing to advance the gay/lesbian cause, but it wounded people's sensibilities.

The homosexual movement goes beyond the search for acceptance and tries to change people's minds through a shock therapy of sorts. Unfortunately, our world is far from ideal, and not all people are open-minded or are willing to listen to arguments that go against their values. Some individuals will never understand how two men or two women can love each other in a sexual way. Their freedom of thought is as sacred as anyone else's.

It is wrong to challenge people's



**Simon Liverani**

beliefs unless they pose a threat to others' liberties, and the disapproval of an elderly grandmother hardly poses a threat to a powerful civil-rights movement.

The prevailing attitude among most people is of indifference. This can be seen as a victory for homosexuals, a step forward from the condemnation of the past. Nowadays, few of the Generation Xers would be shocked if they met a gay or lesbian; even fewer would be critical. However, there is still a shadow of uneasiness within heterosexual people when they come across homosexuals. It is hardly explainable with the old "latent homosexuality" theory, but rather it is related to the impossibility for most straight people to understand gays.

The recently adopted policy regarding gays in the military is emblematic of the common attitude that most Americans have towards that issue. The Clinton administration and the gay/lesbian movement expected too much from an establishment that has always been the fortress of conservatism.

On the other hand, if the issue should not be sexual orientation, but qualification. Why should a soldier display his/her homosexuality?

Details of one's intimate life should have no place in a professional environment where the ability to perform should stand above every-

thing else.

Gay issues have become vital platforms for present and future candidates for Congress and the White House. Clinton used the gay issue as a tool to discredit the Republicans on the basis of their lack of effort in the fight against AIDS. Gays and lesbians are today a strong lobbying power, thanks to size of population and wealth, and are hardly as discriminated against and neglected as many other minorities. The main issue facing today's gay/lesbian community is how to change from the aggressive style of militancy, which brandishes homosexuality as a weapon, to one that tries to understand and gradually change opposing views.

Nearly two thousand years of Christianity have relegated sexual behavior to a dark corner of our consciousness. Thus, to expect everybody to accept homosexuality, with its full baggage of connotation, is at best utopian. However, it is our duty to allow each other the freedom to choose our lifestyles and preferences.

Nobody should be discriminated against or criticized for personal choices and intimate values, and this should apply to both sides of the argument. Although I don't understand the inability of religious people to accept homosexuality, it is their right to have that opinion. It is another thing to demonstrate in an offensive and intolerant fashion, like what happened at the Lied Center.

It should be clear by now that my basic philosophy concerning the matter is "live and let live"; after all, most people don't care what others do in their bedrooms.

It is great to come out of the closet, but why also come out of the bedroom?

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## Fictitious scenario offers explanation

A fictional but fascinating scenario came to me while I was writing about those formerly secret files in Moscow — the ones that affirmed the link between the old Soviet government and the Communist Party USA. If the Soviets could put moles in highly sensitive positions within the United States, why couldn't the Republican Party place a mole in the Democratic Party for the purpose of toppling it from power?

In this scenario I obtained a top-secret transcript of a meeting between Republican National Committee Chairman Haley Barbour and President Bush at Yale's Skull and Bones cave shortly after the Persian Gulf War.

"Mr. President," said Barbour, "you're riding high now with 90 percent approval ratings, but you know you don't have a vision for the country and are bound to lose to a younger Democrat who promises 'change.' You've always served your country well. I have a plan that will involve your sacrificing a second term, allowing Democrats to control the government for two years, but I think it will result in a GOP takeover of Congress in 1994 and the White House in '96, the destruction of the Democratic Party's liberal wing and a Republican dominance for 50 years."

"Gosh, Haley," Mr. Bush replied. "I've always tried to do the right and prudent thing. Do you think it will work?"

"Work? I know it will work, Mr. President. Only no one could ever know. We'd have to take it to our graves."

"Not a problem there, Haley. I could always keep a secret. Why, when I headed the CIA ..."

"Never mind that now, George — may I call you George?"

"Sure Haley, all my friends do. Have another glass of white wine."

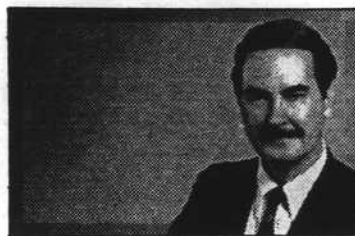
"Here's the plan. We've been grooming this guy Clinton for years."

"Bill Clinton? The governor of Arkansas?" replied Bush in disbelief. "He's a closet Republican?"

"Shhh, someone will hear you. Yes, Clinton is our mole inside the Democratic Party. We started providing women and liquor and the usual stuff while he was still at Oxford. The guy wants to be liked more than you do. Uh, sorry, George."

"That's all right, Haley. I can take it. I was in the war, got shot down ..."

"Listen, will you? Clinton has agreed that if we help get him elected President, he'll do exactly



**Cal Thomas**

as we tell him. He'll raise taxes, after first promising to lower them. Then he'll blame the rich for not paying enough, and he'll do that after raising their taxes retroactively. And when he announces for re-election, he'll refuse to promise he won't raise taxes again. And he'll say he takes that position as a matter of principle! Won't that be a laugh?"

"Now, Haley, let's not make fun of our fellow man."

"But, George, here's the kicker. I've talked to Bob McNamara, and he's agreed to help us. Sometime in 1995, McNamara will publish a book in which he admits to being wrong about the Vietnam War and claiming to have felt that way even while he was ordering young men to die. Veterans groups will go ballistic, reminding everyone again of Clinton's war non-record. We'll get Clinton to say something dumb, like McNamara's book vindicates him. He'll defend his anti-war demonstrations on foreign soil and his attempt to avoid the draft by pulling political strings to join a reserve unit and then, after the lottery threat was diminished, making himself available. We can keep this pot boiling right up to the '96 primaries."

"It sounds good, Haley, but what will people think of me for losing the election?"

"George, if you love your country, you'll go along with this plan. This is the only way Republicans are going to take over. We have an idea for an off-the-wall surgeon general, and we're going to get Clinton to push for gays in the military and abortions for everybody! And listen, there's something else. It's called 'Whitewater.' It could be Clinton's Watergate. We have plenty on that just in case he decides he actually likes being president and wants to break his agreement with us."

Here, the transcript is soiled by spilled white wine and the rest is illegible.

Sound impossible? Well, is there a better way to explain the president's behavior?

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## Time to bite the NRA bullet

Here's a little something about me: I'm a tree-huggin', "peace and love"-type liberal whose picture is probably pasted up at the Young Republican headquarters with a giant slash through my face. I also believe in trickle-down economics.

I think that there may be a special wing for people like me at mental hospitals. I'll let you know.

One of the reasons that I slap myself with the dreaded liberal label is that I believe in gun control. The National Rifle Association has my picture up at its headquarters as well, but its members actually shoot at the picture. Just kidding, NRA people, please don't kill me.

Anyway, I have this theory that guns do in fact kill people. The argument against this from the NRA people (who, by the way, all have great senses of humor — please don't kill me) is that "guns don't kill people, people kill people."

That is true. It does take a psychopathic killer to actually pull the trigger of a high-powered pistol to kill another person. But if we replaced the weapon with, let's say for argument's sake, a leafy stick, then the argument wouldn't quite be the same.

"Leafy sticks don't scratch people about the head and neck, people scratch people about the head and neck" would be a lot easier to deal with, as far as my tree-huggin' conscience is concerned.

But, alas, it just seems that the right for Americans to own weapons with enough firepower to take control of a small nation is a precious one. This is a right that should not be tampered with, and I don't believe that I can change that attitude with one column.

So, I have come up with a perfect



**Todd Elwood**

solution that will not only please liberal freaks like myself, but also keep the happy-go-lucky NRA folks smiling broadly. Get ready to take down my bullet-hole laden picture, NRA, this will be great.

I suggest that we, as a nation of gun-totin', shoot-'em-up citizens, allow everyone to have as many guns as we can carry. No gun can be outlawed, no matter how much power it possesses. No one, no matter how much time they have spent in the "Liberal Trickle-Down" wing of the mental hospital, may be denied a gun.

Then, after everyone is packing some cool-looking heat, we outlaw all ammunition.

No shells, no cartridges, no bullets of any kind will be allowed. All firepower is illegal.

Right now, the NRA is pasting up another picture of my ugly mug in the target practice areas of its compounds, I mean offices. I'm not a gun tease, really.

I say we allow all guns, but instead of the keeping the potential for things to fly out of the guns really fast, we eliminate that problem.

I don't have a problem with any gun, as long as nothing comes out of the barrel at half the speed of light, ready to rip through skin and shred

important internal organs.

After all, guns don't kill people, high-speed bullets expelled from guns kill people.

The NRA people would argue against this idea because it would make guns highly ineffective, especially for killing things. I agree. But think about the potential for fun here.

I played cops and robbers with my older brother a lot as a kid. I've been shot hundreds of times by him. But here's the kicker: I'm still alive.

He would jump from behind a tree and make a cool gun sound, such as, "Bang! Bang!" and then I would fall down, gripping my chest, whispering that death whisper, "You got me, you got me."

Unless, of course, I was wearing my all-protective invisible shield. Then I would be able to fire back right away.

"Vrooo! Vrooo!" I would say (I had a laser pistol that shot through invisible shields), and then it would be his turn to do the death whisper. It was great fun for a couple of kids, and it may be the answer for a terrible social problem as well.

We could make legitimate by law the sound of a gun going off. If a psychopathic killer boards a subway with a gun, for example, all he would have to do would be to repeat the cool gun sound ("Bang! Bang!") several times, and the passengers would have to fall down, gripping their chests, whispering the death whisper.

Unless, of course, they were all smart enough to be wearing their all-protective invisible shields.

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**Mike Luckovich**