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Our
VIEW

Too much information

Release of Tripp tapes won't benefit anyone

We've said it once, we'll say it again — enough already. It was bad enough that all four hours of the Clinton testimony were released for public consumption, but now the taped conversations between Linda Tripp and Monica Lewinsky are being considered for release.

When it was announced that the testimony was to be released, we scolded Congress for setting a dangerous precedent.

Beyond the fact that it is evidence in a legal proceeding, beyond the fact that Clinton's testimony and Tripp's tape were never intended for the masses, beyond the facts that CNN has been "Clinton's Notorious Notables" for weeks now, one main question remains:

How much evidence does the public really need to see?

After the tapes, are we going to see the dress? The stain? More still?

Where is the line drawn?

Many polls point to the public's tiring of evidence with the Clinton/Lewinsky scandal. They want Congress to act or stop, not debate.

If the Tripp tapes see the light of day, television stations will broadcast them in their entirety.

Even if just parts of the tapes are released, it's still far too much — more than the public wants, more than the president wants, more than we want.

This time, it's the Democrats who are pushing heavily, claiming that there is evidence to support the president on the tapes.

It seems "evidence" is the new watchword for politics these days.

Despite this massive flood of "evidence" being lauded on the people of the world, very few people have changed their minds.

Opinions show no sign of changing in the near future. The lines have been drawn, and the fire is burning very well, thank you very much, without more fuel on it.

Releasing more evidence reduces Capitol Hill to a mud-slinging match in which no one will win, especially not the American people.

Republican or Democrat, conservative or liberal, for or against the president, you know what you need to know to form your opinion.

With major decisions from Washington, D.C., coming in the near future, what the public needs to hear is not more evidence, but answers, resolutions, decisions.

We know the story. We know the facts. So stop with the evidence already, and start with proceedings, if you're going to have them, or just give it up and walk away.

Somehow, we doubt the Tripp tapes will change anyone's mind.

Mook's
VIEW



Moral response

A bold, new solution to the problem of divorce



TIM SULLIVAN is a third-year law student and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

I knew presiding as the Bishop of the Diocese of Lincoln would present a great many challenges. One challenge in particular, the problem of divorce, has long been a preoccupation of mine.

I've performed a great many marriages. I've also witnessed the breakdown of what has seemed to be an equally great number of marriages.

My experiences counseling couples going through marital difficulties have caused me a great deal of personal sadness and compelled me to consider solutions I never thought I would.

After a great deal of research, meditation and prayer was devoted to this matter, I have found an appropriate, and indeed a moral, response for dealing with this grave social problem which for so many years has plagued our American culture.

According to the Society for Intelligent New Solutions (S.I.N.S.), 66 percent of all marriages end in divorce. Americans waste \$226 billion every year on weddings, flowers, dresses, photographers and the like to marry one another.

Americans squander another \$325 billion on divorce lawyers each and every year. S.I.N.S. estimates that a full 40 percent of the increase in the number of lawyers in the last 20 years has been because of divorce.

Not only does this represent a drain of \$551 billion from the economy each year, but S.I.N.S. estimates we may squander another \$700 billion each year on such meaningless pursuits as family therapy, counseling and other pre-divorce activities.

Considering that \$1.2 trillion is wasted every year on premarital, marital and pre-divorce activities, a well-planned, well-conceived solution is certainly mandated.

Some may find my response to this dilemma radical or even sacrilegious. Those with such concerns

should find comfort in knowing that the American Conference of United Religious Leaders has reviewed and given my plan their unanimous support.

I propose minimum 20-year prison sentences for those convicted of attempting to get married, and 40-year terms for those performing or assisting in the performance of a marriage.

Additionally, all current marriages would be administratively annulled by the county clerks of each county under this legislation.

As soon as my plan to criminalize marriage wins Senate approval and is signed into law by President Clinton, as I am certain it shall, the economy will benefit, and there will be a great many other social as well as spiritual advantages.

No longer will Hillary and the spouses of other adulterers feel the need to hang their heads in shame in public.

A great burden will be lifted from our court system, which currently devotes 41 percent of its time and resources to dealing with divorces and child custody battles. As a result, the number of worthless, low-life, scum-sucking attorneys will go down — a great accomplishment in and of itself.

Young juvenile delinquents as well as older criminal-types will no longer be able to blame their having come from a broken home as a contributing factor to their hopelessly dysfunctional personalities.

Homosexuals will no longer find it necessary to lobby state legislatures to win the right to marry or be recognized as married couples for purposes of health insurance or home mortgages. Lenders will no longer be able to discriminate against homosexual couples, nor will they be able to discriminate against single women, a long-standing problem in this country.

Self-destructive behaviors such as alcoholism, drug addiction and suicide will decrease in direct proportion to the lack of a sense of guilt which Americans somehow find it necessary to feel when they divorce their partners.

Spiritually, everyone will be able to rest assured they won't be condemned to hell and eternal damnation for having sex outside of marriage, much less for having coveted thy neighbor's wife.

Indeed, even those who may have done so in the past will likely only

need endure a brief stay in purgatory before ascending to their rightful place in God's kingdom.

Some may wonder what effect the annulment of all current marriages will have on traditional family gatherings. No doubt there will be those among us who will need to learn new ways of finding fulfillment which the traditional family unit has provided in the past.

I know there will be those who will oppose this response, and still others who will accept it yet find it difficult to adjust to life without marriage and the traditional family unit. I have planned for this as well.

Extensive study and preparation has enabled us to send these people to H.E.L.L., the House of Emancipated Liberal Lovers, Inc.

H.E.L.L. is a non-profit corporation which is currently constructing residential treatment facilities.

This project is the result of years of extensive study and research devoted to the areas of relationships, human sexuality and alternative lifestyles.

Those experiencing severe emotional distress as they learn to adjust to life without marriage will be offered free treatment.

Judges will be given the option of sentencing persons who attempt to get married to probation, with a stay in H.E.L.L. as a condition of an offender's successful completion of probation.

H.E.L.L. will grow to more than 2,000 residential facilities nationwide. Each facility will be staffed by trained professionals whose mission will be to counsel and teach so that all may begin to reap the benefits of their new freedom as soon as possible.

Some have questioned my integrity in this matter, accusing me of expecting to somehow profit from my plan. I see no way I might profit or expect to benefit in any way. My only gain will be the mutual benefits I will share with every other American.

Indeed, my earthly reward will be in knowing the great good I have done mankind.

Once every American has experienced life free of the constraints of marriage, and has reaped the benefits of the liberal and open attitudes toward relationships that eventually will become the norm, my reward will most certainly come only from my ascension into my rightful place in God's kingdom.