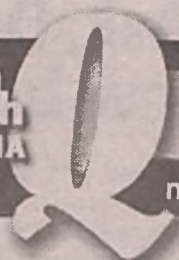


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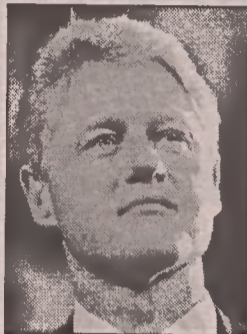
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Editor's note

Mixed messages

I liked Bill Clinton. I voted for him. Twice. I felt safe when he was president. Of course I don't feel quite as safe these days as I did back then. But then few of us in the LGBT community feel as much caring and compassion from our currently appointed president.

Over the past week (after Ronald Reagan's funeral media frenzy), Clinton



took the spotlight with the publication of his new book, "My Life."

I didn't rush out and buy a copy, but I did pick up one on sale the other day at a store a few blocks away from the office. I

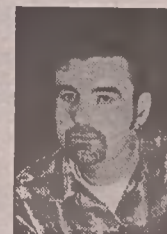
haven't finished it yet, but I have done a pretty decent skimming of the entire book. I noticed that there was very little mention of the gay and lesbian issues he tackled during his term and even fewer mentions of the gay and lesbian individuals that played prominent roles in the Clinton presidency.

Then an email from an acquaintance came across my desk pointing out specifically what I had already noticed.

"My first thought was to check out what President Clinton had to say about David Mixner," wrote activist Charles Francis. "No mention of Mixner. He is not listed in the index, nor mentioned in any of the gay passages listed in the index. How could that be? Mixner played a significant role in Clinton's life and Presidency. This is a story in itself, that Mixner would not make the autobiography when thousands of names in this book are tossed around like confetti. Then, I checked for Ambassador James Hormel — a huge story. No mention. Then Roberta Achtenberg, the first openly gay person to receive Senate confirmation, attacked by Jesse Helms. No mention. Bob Hattoy, no mention. Bob was a White House personnel advisor. Richard Socarides, no mention; Socarides was a special assistant to the president on gay and lesbian issues. Keith Boykin, special assistant to the president on gay and lesbian issues, no mention. Boykin set up the first meeting with gay leaders and a sitting President. The meeting was not mentioned. Julian Potter, White House liaison to gay and lesbian community, no mention. Fred Hochberg, major supporter of Clinton's and deputy director, Small Business Administration, no mention. Paul Yandura, respected gay leader who worked in the Clinton White House, no mention. Todd Dickinson, Assistant Secretary of Commerce, no mention. Todd, I believe, was the highest ranking openly gay appointee in the Administration. John Berry, former Assistant Sec. of Interior, no mention."

I don't get it. What happened, Bill? Did all of those people just slip your mind, or did something prompt you to revise your history somewhat? I wanna know, because I'm a little pissed off.

That was Tuesday. Then came Wednesday. Out of the blue, born



from the loins of the very laurels the Republican Party likes to base its current state of bliss on, came a message of support and hope for those of us left of the great divide.

Ron Reagan. Not the father, but the son. Everybody always calls him Ron Reagan Jr., but he's actually Ronald Prescott Reagan, as opposed to Ronald Wilson Reagan.

I've always known that Reagan was a liberal and I'd read about the potshot he took at George W. Bush back in 2000, but Reagan had remained tight-lipped on the subject, until he interviewed with Larry King on CNN this past week.

"You said [your] dad was also a deeply unabashedly religious man," King said to Reagan. "But he never made the mistake of wearing his faith on his sleeve to gain political advantage. Were you referring to the president? Everyone thought that."

"Everybody thought I was talking about George," Reagan responded. "But people connected with George W. Bush thought I was talking about George W. Bush. And then I began to think, maybe I was, I just didn't know it."

King pushed the issue a little further: "Do you think [Bush] wears his religion on his sleeve? He certainly refers to it more than your father ever did."

"Well, you know, there was that answer he gave to the question about, did you talk



to your father about going into Iraq? No, I talked to a higher father, you know, the almighty," Reagan recalled.

"When you hear somebody justifying a war by citing the almighty, God, I get a little worried, frankly. The other guys do that a lot. Osama bin Laden's always talking about Allah, what Allah wants, that he's on his side. I think that's uncomfortable."

Then came the clincher — when King asked Reagan if he would support George W. Bush for reelection.

"No, I won't," Reagan shot back flatly. I will vote for whoever the viable candidate is who can defeat George W. Bush."

Yee-ha! Finally somebody from the very family that the current administration points to as most venerable stood up and said something important. Something that rings of truth, spirit and guts. Thanks, Ron, for being tough. Now could you get Mary Cheney on the phone?

— David Moore
Editor

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