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QNotes

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Editor's note



I don't like the way things are looking in this country politically right now. Not at all.

I'm not an alarmist, but it is starting to make me worry a little. Take a look at these headlines:

Psychiatrist Testifies 'Gay Rage' Legitimate

Oshkosh, Wis. — A forensic psychiatrist has told an Oshkosh court that 'gay rage' exists and that a man was legally insane when he killed a gay Wisconsin man after having sex with him.

New Anti-Gay Attack From Ed. Secretary: 'Schools Not Place For Gay Issues'

Washington, D.C. — Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings says she has no apologies to make for criticizing a PBS children's series which features an episode with a lesbian family.

Charges reinstated against gay marriage mayor

Albany, N.Y. — Criminal charges against New Paltz Village Mayor Jason West for marrying gay couples were reinstated by a judge Wednesday.

Virginia anti-gay license plates gain momentum

Richmond, Va. — Cars in Virginia could soon have license plates extolling traditional marriage.

Throughout the late 20th century we all watched as the struggle for gay and lesbian civil rights moved along, stymied by the AIDS crisis in the '80s and then reinvigorated by the election of a relatively liberal Democrat — Bill Clinton — in the '90s.

Things looked good. There were gay people all over the place — in television and film we were no longer played as mental cases — we actually had entire TV shows about us. In politics there were openly gay congress people and senators and queer staffers could be found everywhere in the Clinton administration.

Nobody was talking about gay marriage then — but it seemed like a good time. The poison and hate-spewing evangelical anti-gay Christian right-wingers weren't organized to go after us with such a vengeance just yet.

That all changed, of course, in the presidential elections of 2000.

I often wonder how things would have

turned out if Jeb Bush wasn't the governor of Florida and the electoral votes had gone to Al Gore — the man who should have rightfully been president.

How would Gore have responded to 9/11? Would Republicans have launched a never-ending attack on Gore like the one they maintained against Clinton throughout both his terms?

Things looked pretty dark after George W. Bush was appointed to office.

Gone were the gay cabinet members. No more big parties with Ellen DeGeneres and her crazy girlfriend.

In the beginning, however, Bush attempted to make an effort to reach out to LGBT Americans. Remember this?

Bush meets with gay supporters — a positive first step for GOP nominee

Dialogue begun this week in effort to unite the Republican Party

April 13, 2000 — As part of an ongoing dialogue with gay Republicans this week, Governor George W. Bush of Texas, the presumptive nominee for the GOP presidential nomination, met today with a group of his gay supporters in Austin and welcomed gay Americans to join his campaign.

"I welcome gay Americans into my campaign," Bush told reporters after the meeting. "I want the Republicans, conservative Republicans to understand we judge people based upon their heart and soul, that's what the campaign is about. And while we disagree on gay marriage for example, we agree on a lot of other issues and it's important for people to hear that."

Where did all that positive energy go? What happened? How could a campaign that seemed to propose such promise give birth to a ravenous, hate-filled political party that maintains in many of its own party platforms that gays and lesbians are an aberration?

In North Carolina, the Republicans' platform states that homosexuality "is not normal and should not be established as an acceptable 'alternative' lifestyle either in public education or in public policy."

In South Carolina, Republicans say that they "support tolerance," but "do not agree that unnatural or unhealthy sexual practices ought to be legitimized or promoted in the classroom, nor do we believe that known practicing homosexu-

see **POLITICAL** on 16

Letters to editor

On President Bush's State of the Union:

Where is the outrage? I was stunned with President Bush's remark on the need for an amendment to the Constitution to ban same-sex marriages. Has this man no shame? As he goes on and on about America being the world's cradle of freedom, as he goes on and on about America bringing freedom to the

mid-east, he then inserts his support for an amendment to the Constitution to deny marriage rights to all gay, lesbian, intersexed and transgender citizens.

With his Vice President sitting directly behind him, he calls for an amendment to the constitution to ban his VP's daughter and her partner the same rights as other loving couples.

Where is the outrage? How can this just slip by the mass media, as if it means nothing?

— Janice Josephine Carney
via email

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