

THE HATE CRIMES AMENDMENT AND LOSING THE MARRIAGE WAR

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Wars often turn on battles that seem no more than skirmishes at the time. Take the Battle of Trenton, fought on December 26, 1776. Fewer than two dozen men died on both sides. No territory changed hands.

And yet, more than Saratoga, it was this engagement – when Washington famously crossed the Delaware and surprised the Hessians (capturing 1,000 of George III’s mercenaries) -- that marked the beginning of end of His Majesty’s control of the 13 colonies.

Similarly, years hence it may be determined that marriage was lost on the floor of the House of Representatives on September 15th, in a vote on an obscure amendment that, at first blush, seems to have nothing to do with the institution of marriage. If so, we can thank House Republicans and the timorous pro-family movement for a disaster of abrupt-climate-change magnitude.

There were two very, very bad votes that day -- one was on an amendment to the Child Safety Act, a worthy measure to increase penalties for those who prey on children. The amendment adds two lethal words, “sexual orientation,” to the federal hate crimes statute. If passed by the Senate and signed into law, it would be the first time the federal government recognized homosexuals as a protected class for civil rights purposes.

The gay lobby was delirious. Joe Solmonese, president of the Human Rights Campaign, called it an “incredibly historic vote.”

The amendment passed 223-199, as 30 lifestyle-friendly Republicans sided with the party of perversion. But that's not the end of the story. The final vote on the bill, with the ticking time-bomb for America's families embedded therein, was 371-52. All but a handful of Republicans lacked the conviction or the integrity to vote against the bill with the radioactive amendment.

Why? Good old fashioned GOP gutlessness. Republicans were afraid that if they voted against the amended bill, a challenger would hit them with, "And my opponent voted against a measure to protect children from sexual predators!"

Now, a companion bill is pending in the Senate, where similar measures have passed before. Given that Bush hasn't exercised the veto once in 4 ½ years (and has always been a reluctant culture warrior, at best), the prospect of the president riding to the rescue is bleak as New England in February.

Hate-crimes laws are attempts to penalize ideas – bad ideas, but ideas nonetheless.

Under these statutes, those who commit, say, assault or harassment motivated by animus toward a particular group (characterized by race, religion, nationality or gender) receive harsher punishment than criminals who hate their victims merely as individuals. The extra punishment is for holding anti-whatever views. In essence, hate-crimes laws are a species of mind-control. That their proponents purport to be champions of free speech is instructive.

Adding sexual orientation (so-called) makes it infinitely worse. With one exception, all of the other protected classes are based on immutable characteristics. (One doesn't come out of the race closet, so to speak, and announce one's self as a black or an

Asian.) Even religious affiliation, which can change, is usually determined by birth.

There is not a scintilla of evidence that homosexuality is innate. (The search for the “gay gene” turned out to be comparable to the Roswell landings -- as scientific as scientology.) A large and growing contingent of ex-homosexuals testifies against sexual determinism.

Under the amendment, civil-rights status will be conferred based solely on bedroom behavior. This opens the door to demands by other “sexual minorities” (transsexuals, cross-dressers, bisexuals, pedophiles, sadomasochists) that their proclivities be similarly sanctioned.

The number of hate crimes committed in America each year is insignificant. The number ascribed to sexual orientation is infinitesimal.

My friend Bob Knight, director of the Culture & Family Institute of Concerned Women for America, points out that there were 11 million reported crimes in America in 2003. Of those, nearly 1.4 million were violent. By comparison, there were 7,489 hate crimes, of which 1,239 were attributed to sexual orientation. Gay-bashing is as much a problem as male breast cancer – possibly less.

Granting protected status to homosexuals says the following: That they are an identifiable group with immutable characteristics That they are persecuted and in need of special protection. And that any objection to their conduct is vile bigotry on par with racism or anti-Semitism.

The foregoing brings us back to the concept of mind-control. The ultimate goal of the homosexual movement is to use the state

to crush dissent. In Scandinavia and Canada, ministers have been threatened with jail for expressing the Biblical perspective on sodomy.

In Alberta, Rev. Stephen Boissoin is about to face a Human Rights inquisition for a letter to the editor critical of the province's pro-homo curriculum. (Boissoin noted the lifestyle being touted is dangerous and frequently fatal. Given the prevalence of STDs among homosexuals, the proposition should be self-evident.) If convicted of acknowledging reality, Boissoin faces thousands of dollars in fines and being forced to publicly apologize for his homophobic outburst.

Last year, 4 members of the evangelical group Repent America were arrested for preaching, displaying banners and signing hymns at Philadelphia's "OutFest 2004" (a sodomy celebration partially funded with \$22,500 from the city). The Philadelphia Four were charged with a variety of offenses, including incitement. If convicted, each could have been sentenced to 47 years in prison.

Though a judge ultimately dismissed all charges on First Amendment grounds, the fact that prosecutors were gung ho to proceed with the cases (and the Bush Justice Department refused to intervene) sends a bone-chilling message.

Could it get worse? Absolutely.

In 2000, Rev. Rob Schenck, an activist on these issues, was listening to oral arguments before the Supreme Court on the Boy Scouts case. The Court ultimately vindicated the Scouts' free-association right to reject homosexual leaders.

Schenck reports that Clinton's liaison for gay issues, who assumed he was an ally, leaned over and whispered to him: "We're

not going to win this case, but that's okay. Once we get hate crimes laws on the books, we're going to go after the Scouts and all the other bigots." The other bigots would include the Salvation Army, Catholic Church, Southern Baptist Convention, Union of Orthodox Rabbis and anyone else who takes the Bible seriously.

And family friendly Republicans voted for such a measure en masse, because they were afraid of their position being misrepresented. But theirs' isn't the only failure of will.

The coalition of national pro-family groups that's pushing the Federal Marriage Amendment has determined that success hinges on scrupulously avoiding any public discussion of homosexuality. They seek to stop a thing without naming it – always a difficult proposition.

The coalition decided that a direct challenge to the homosexual ethos (that same-sex couples are equal in dignity and worth to a father and mother working to ensure society's future) would allow them to be cast as bigots.

Hence, their argument boils down to “do it for the kids” (truly, a courageous stand). Traditional marriage must be preserved because it's the best way to raise children, they plead. While indisputably true, by defaulting on the more fundamental point – why two men who are sodomizing each other are not the moral equivalent of a man and a woman joined in a monogamous relationship, sanctified by faith and tradition – they have allowed the social acceptance of homosexuality to advance unhindered. To win a battle, they are ceding ultimate victory.

Thus, while our side wins state marriage referendums, theirs continues to tighten its iron grip on the culture. Lifestyle instruction in the public schools proceeds apace, as does societal acceptance (including corporate support), entertainment

indoctrination and government validation -- like adding sexual orientation to hate crimes laws.

Little wonder that House Republicans (who claim to be conservatives) didn't think the hate-crimes amendment worth a fight -- not when the underlying message of FMA supporters is: All we really care about is nomenclature. And still they're no closer to passing the marriage amendment than when they started.

Whether or not September 15, 2005 turns out to be a victory of Trentonian proportions for homosexuals remains to be seen. But if we are to have any chance of avoiding a Yorktown, we must somehow muster the courage to brave charges of bigotry. Ultimately, we must admit that a man who's into *schtuping* other men is not a worthy object of veneration.

Otherwise, let's admit defeat here, regroup and look for the next war to lose.

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