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Miss Kalifornia: Hate Can Be Beautiful.

The Religious Right, that hate-mongering group of self-described Christians, have once again found a new spokesperson and a new venue: a beauty queen and a beauty contest. This tiara-ed princess' words have been used over the ages to support some of the most evil and indefensible acts of hate and bigotry:

"No offense to anyone here, but I was raised to believe that..."

- \* The Bible sanctions slavery and Negroes have no soul (the U.S. importation of over 10 million African slaves for over two centuries until 1808, and then the continued legally-sanctioned act of owning people until the 13th Amendment in 1865)
- \* Women should not have the vote and should remain in the home (Women's Suffrage 1860s)
- \* Jews are sub-human Christ Killers, and there is only one superior race (Nazi Germany 1920s)
- \* Blacks and Whites should remain separate (Jim Crow Laws of the 1880s) and should certainly never marry (1960s)
- \* Blacks and women should never be in the regular military as they would be a distraction to white men fighting in combat (1940s)
- \* Homosexuals should not be granted "special" rights, such as marriage, protection in housing and employment, custody of their children, etc., which are available to all other Americans



(Today)

First, "I was raised to believe" arguments only prove that not everyone should be permitted to procreate. (Half-joking.) Furthermore, the tactic which allows us to hide our bigotry behind some idea of "my sacred, untouchable belief system" is patently ridiculous. It is a simple fact. The U.S. is not a theocracy and all citizens, be they gay, straight, Asian, whatever, deserve - and should demand - the same rights. Period. I am not suggesting "Judge ye not..." Judge away, but give to me my rights. Every last one of them, and if the Religious Right who believe so vehemently in God's Word as law (women are an abomination during menstruation, touching pig's skin is an abomination, shaving your beard is an abomination, etc.), then by all means move to a theocracy. These forms of government are plentiful in the Middle East.

Then, of course, there is the majority argument. Not only is this majority lessening each year - thanks in part to the continued thinning of the tribe, such as Jerry Falwell, Jesse Helms, etc., and the new generation of voters - but it holds no water. Just ask the U.S. Supreme Court: Brown v. Board of Education (1954), Loving v. Virginia (1967), Romer v. Evans (1996), etc., etc. The vulnerable minority does in fact have a voice in issues of equal protection and equal rights under the law against a powerful majority. We tend to forget that when we are the powerful majority. But we cannot depend upon the goodness of the courts or the legislature.

No one will give you what you feel that you deserve. If



the GLBTQ community continues to pony-up to the Democrat Party with millions of dollars and millions of votes, each and every single election cycle while never getting equal representation, then why would the party change direction? Why fight for gay rights and possibly lose swing votes? The GLBTQ community have been duped again and again. Remember how "Gays in the Military" (1992 election) became the "Stay in the Closet" program which we have now? Pay your taxes, give large sums of contribution money, we may even invite you to a black tie and lie to you about all that we will get done for you this go-around ("Oh, wow, I met Barack and Michelle.")

Now the Religious Right claims that we, the LGBTQ (why do we keep switching the L and G, and does anyone really care?), have a de facto leader. Seriously? Perez Hilton. And now we're the miscreants because he called her a "dumb bitch"? Well, she is a dumb (hate-mongering) bitch, and he is a dumb fag who decided to judge a beauty pageant . I am not expecting sweeping speeches from a gossip columnist, but he did have the balls to stand up. Maybe he has done more for the cause than we can appreciate just yet. And it is much more than say the gay elite has done. David Geffen, point of fact, could have opted to not help fund Mr. Obama since the Democrat platform excluded our community from marriage rights. This alone sends a message to the entire country and perpetuates the idea that some religious ideology should govern legislation and guide how Americans perceive homosexuals, etc. Mr. Geffen prefers to rub shoulders with the Democrat elite and have his name on medical schools.

If they want to claim that Mr. Hilton is the voice of LGBTQ,



then fine. I want to claim that the GOP leaders consist of a dope-fiend, morbidly obese blowhard radio personality (Rush) and another former beauty queen who somehow got to be governor of a very big state with very few people (Palin). That thought gives me much comfort as I watch the GOP careen toward utter irrelevancy. The Dems fare no better toward true moral fortitude.

The sad truth is that today's New Democrats have not won due to a new course, but due to claiming the mantle of "No New Taxes" from the GOP. "95 percent of 'working families' (whatever that means) will have reduced taxes." This has been said so often that I hear it in my sleep. And while homosexual tax dollars are going to not only pay for U.S. schools, roads, defense, politician salaries, etc., gays are still being denied the most basic of rights and protections. Our dollars are even going to prop up foreign governments which not only prohibit little girls from school, but permit gays to be dragged out into the streets and shot. And we sit back and wait.

Beau Vyne of BB! News said it best in the Spring 2009 edition of Turning The Tide: "We've been fighting since birth; you'd think we'd know how to fight more effectively." Well, first maybe we should forget about decorating our homes and start worrying how we can be safe in our homes. Give up showering gifts on our nieces and nephews, and begin fighting for rights to have our own children. Forego all weddings until we can have our own. Stop sitting safe in our living rooms while hate crimes against homosexuals and others like us with diverse lifestyles continue to be ignored or minimized. Overwhelm hate-mongering political and religious leaders with our own "grass roots"



campaigns. Support no candidates, charities, organizations, etc., unless they specifically support our cause and have demonstrated this support in a substantive way. We must bring this message to our bars, work, clubs, churches, or wherever we go. Or do nothing, and when a little kid in California gets shot dead for being gay, then you can blame yourself as you comfortably sit in your living room watching 120 channels of satellite T.V.

Seriously, where is this 10 percent of our society that I have heard so much about since Kinsey? I just can't believe that a group so large as the GLBTQ community has done so very little. Unlike Blacks, Latinos, women, or the physically-challenged, we have learned from a young age to blend in far too well. Like Vyne, I wonder when we'll stop waiting for Obama to deign to let gays serve openly or change his mind on equal marriage rights for all - or is it far too important to get re-elected, and our votes are meaningless. Or the Log Cabin Republicans. Do we truly expect them to sway the GOP to consider us anything more than perverts and deviants, little less citizens who deserve equal rights and equal protections? Do those butchered for being "different" deserve just a little more from us?

I think they do. And if the LGBTQ community won't stand up once and for all in every single venue possible, then I won't be part of it any longer. I don't know exactly where I stand, but I won't be trampled, abused, taken advantage of, dismissed, ignored, told to sit down and be quiet, reassured that soon I will be fully accepted - but now is not the right time. No. Not



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ever again.

To my GLBTQ friends: No tornado is going to come and sweep you away to that Magical Land of OZ where gays can live with full rights and protections, We must be that tornado. Let them hate, but you can use the righteous indignation that you feel for those of <sup>us</sup> butchered, abused, shunned, and shut out. Remember that hot NY June in 1969. Stonewall is more than a stop on a sight-seeing tour of the city. Much more. Let Stonewall live again, and let's start by shutting down every single beauty pageant from Walla Walla, Washington, to Kalamazoo.