

Hinson Memorial conciliatory?

Just Out received copies of many letters to the editor of The Oregonian last month. Most of the letters were in response to a column by Steve Duin and an editorial by David Reinhard. Most of the letters were printed in The Oregonian in one form or another.

Duin's column and Reinhard's editorial both used religion as the shibboleth to justify homophobia and to deny gays and lesbians basic human rights. The following letter addresses the problem of religious oppression of lesbians and gays at its source: the neighborhood church.

— Ed.

To the Editor
The Oregonian
1320 SW Broadway
Portland, Oregon 97201

"In My Opinion," by the Reverend S. Bowen Matthews, senior pastor at Hinson Memorial Baptist Church (July 5, 1988), is to be commended for setting straight certain facts. Unfortunately, however, Rev. Matthews uses the correct term "orientation" but apparently fails to understand it. He seems to correlate it with choice. It is not. A homosexual can no more change his orientation to heterosexuality than can a heterosexual change his orientation to homosexuality. He has no more control over his orientation than does one have over his race

or the color of his skin. He is born with these. Sexual orientation is determined perhaps in utero or at the latest in the very early stages of life. If God determines orientation, why should one "know shame"?

Rev. Matthews states that Hinson "is an agent of reconciliation." Perhaps. But what, pray tell, has Hinson ever attempted toward reconciliation between the Christian community and the homosexual community?

Back in 1984, the Portland Gay Men's Chorus presented a concert at nearby Benson High School. This was picketed by a loud and raucous crowd of anti-gay/lesbian people. We gained the impression — whether rightly or wrongly, I do not know — that Hinson was well represented in that crowd and had possibly instigated the picketing. Thereafter, on November 29, 1984, I wrote a letter to Hinson, and append a copy of that letter — which is a part of this letter.

What response did we have from Hinson? To this day, not a single word.

Nevertheless, Portland Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays renews its offer.

Selah!

November 29, 1984

The Reverend Donald R. Baker, Pastor
Hinson Memorial Baptist Church
1135 SE 20th Avenue
Portland, OR 97214

Dear Pastor Baker:

I write as a member of the Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. We have noted

over a period of time that your church is vigorously opposed to lesbians and gay men. These are our children and our friends, and the existence of such hostility naturally distresses us.

We desire to establish communication with you, and think it would be beneficial to us to hear a clear statement of your position and reasons therefor. Concurrently, we would appreciate an opportunity to meet with you and present our position and supportive reasons. Dialogue could possibly be mutually enlightening.

To this end, we invite you to send a delegation or panel of four, five or six of yourself or your members, as you may choose, to attend one of our monthly meetings of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, and to explain to us in some detail the particular reasons for your thinking. At some convenient time also, in like manner, we offer to send a delegation from our group — a panel of four, five or six people — to present to you the facts behind our position and the reasons therefor. We think that each panel should, during the latter part of its presentation, receive and respond to questions from those in attendance.

Certainly, nothing is accomplished by lack of communication. It may not be reasonable to expect that either of us would convince the other of our respective positions, but if we can each recognize that we are all children of God, it may be that we can all live with more mutual respect and tolerance for each other.

Shalom.

William K. Shepherd
Portland

Pandering?

To the Editor:

Lenora Fulani, the "Independent Candidate for President of the United States," failed to get the 1,000 necessary people at her nominating convention. Jay Brown, in his predictable pattern, blames it on homophobia. I would like to offer a more logical reason: Ms. Fulani, in all the advertising and campaign materials I saw, continually failed to rise above platitudes, simple catch-phrases and special-interest-group pandering. What kind of alternative is that?

It is my opinion that the gay people in this area should be credited for not putting her on the ballot; maybe she will now take the time to expand her platform and tell us what she intends to do about the issues facing this nation.

Robert Hansen
Portland

Editor's note: *Of course! In racist, sexist America, it couldn't have had anything to do with Lenora Fulani being an outspoken black woman who supports lesbian and gay rights.*

A few blacks, a few Native Americans, a few progressives would have convinced me otherwise.

Miscommunications

Due to an error by U.S. West Communications, Just Out telephones were disconnected in late July. 236-1252 is still a good number — try again.

DANCE PANCE




**HEALING
CRYSTALS**

8125 SE 13 Ave
234-2224

HAPPY HARVEST

G R O C E R S



COME
CELEBRATE THE FIRST
ANNIVERSARY OF YOUR
NEIGHBORHOOD NATURAL
FOODS STORE & VEGETARIAN CAFE!
1 BLOCK SOUTH OF BURNSIDE

ON SALE:
KIMONO
CONDOMS 3 pk.
"IN A KIMONO
OR NOT AT ALL!"
\$1.85 REG. \$2.49
SALE PRICES THRU 8/22/88

235-5358
2348 SE ANKENY


BURNED OUT? READY FOR A CHANGE?

**You are just one phone call away
from a new life as an interior decorator.**

- Complete training and guidance
- Primary or secondary income potential
- Flexible hours and independence
- Low investment and overhead

CALL US TODAY! 620-3399





shampoos • conditioners • styling
aids • skin cleansers • toners •
masques • body lotions & powders
• moisturizers • soaps • incense •
herbal extracts • deodorants •
toothpaste • vitamins

available at:

H A I R

by *Stewell*

**Mention Just Out and receive
20% off products**

35 N.E. 20th
230-6901

natural hair and skin
care product center
free consultation