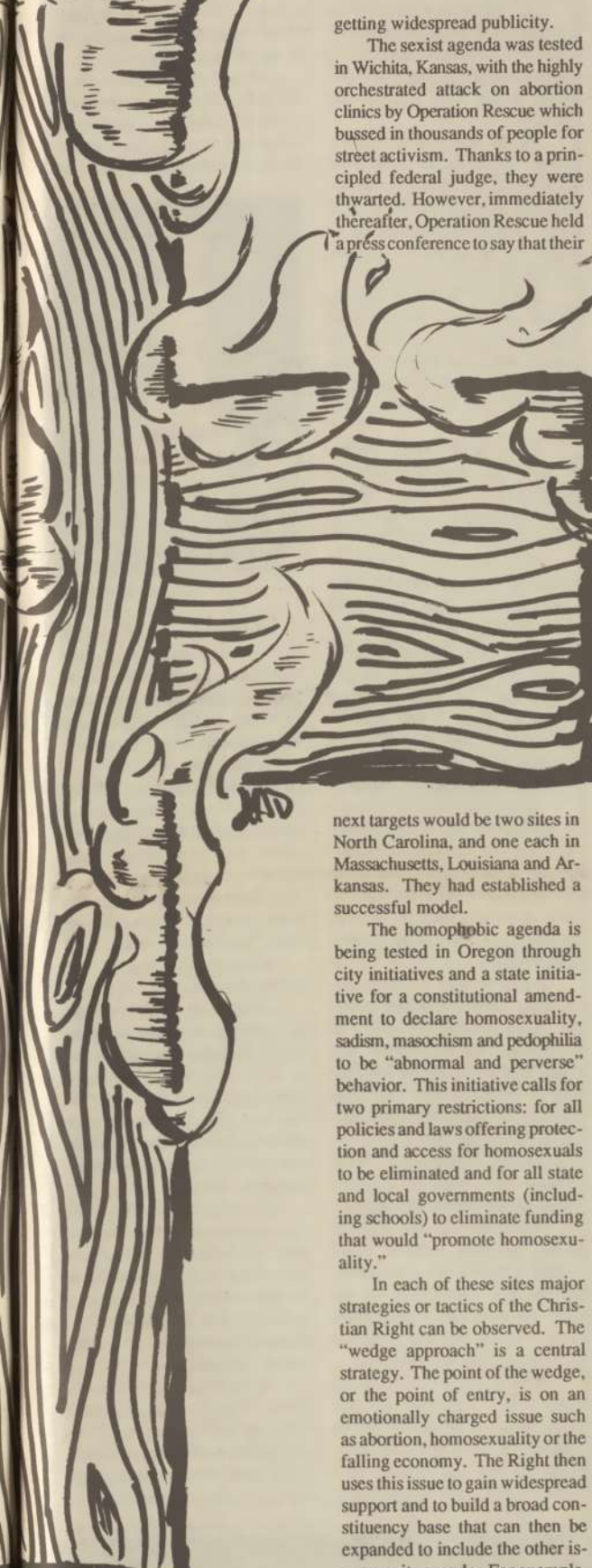


onians

f basic human rights



getting widespread publicity.

The sexist agenda was tested in Wichita, Kansas, with the highly orchestrated attack on abortion clinics by Operation Rescue which bussed in thousands of people for street activism. Thanks to a principled federal judge, they were thwarted. However, immediately thereafter, Operation Rescue held a press conference to say that their

of the small piece of pie that African-Americans earned the hard way.

The Christian Right's campaign against homosexuality and for "traditional family values" illustrates clearly the use of misinformation to support the idea of morality as the central issue instead of civil rights. Lesbians and gays are particularly vulnerable because, even though in existence for centuries, there has been group visibility only since the beginning of the lesbian and gay movement with Stonewall in 1969. This brief period of visibility creates vulnerability for two primary reasons. Lack of visibility means that there is widespread ignorance on the part of the general public concerning this area of sexuality and culture. Thus, when the Right puts out the information that lesbians and gay men are child molesters, the public accepts it as truth, despite the data that demonstrates that 95% of those sexually abusing children are heterosexual men.

An insistence upon democracy as named by the Civil Rights Movement—requiring justice, liberation and participation—is the greatest threat to the Christian authoritarian agenda. It is the work of those of us who believe in freedom to develop a local and national movement of liberation that claims our communities in the name of all the many diverse peoples who occupy them. It is incumbent upon us at this crucial juncture of history to establish the values that are inclusive of everyone and to reject the values of exclusion and repression.

The Christian Right's vision is modeled on the past, the time of the television Cleavers, when the power to exclude gave a few white people security. The liberation vision has no model because it looks to the present diversity and to the future which requires building a democratic society that includes everyone.

We have to protect the democracy that we have in the present while building the new inclusive society.

next targets would be two sites in North Carolina, and one each in Massachusetts, Louisiana and Arkansas. They had established a successful model.

The homophobic agenda is being tested in Oregon through city initiatives and a state initiative for a constitutional amendment to declare homosexuality, sadism, masochism and pedophilia to be "abnormal and perverse" behavior. This initiative calls for two primary restrictions: for all policies and laws offering protection and access for homosexuals to be eliminated and for all state and local governments (including schools) to eliminate funding that would "promote homosexuality."

In each of these sites major strategies or tactics of the Christian Right can be observed. The "wedge approach" is a central strategy. The point of the wedge, or the point of entry, is on an emotionally charged issue such as abortion, homosexuality or the falling economy. The Right then uses this issue to gain widespread support and to build a broad constituency base that can then be expanded to include the other issues on its agenda. For example, they provide information about abortion, affirmative action, parental leave, welfare, etc., to the membership and voting base built around the issue of homosexuality and then organize them to vote on these issues.

The second way the wedge is used is to divide communities against themselves and to break up the progressive base for social change. For instance, in Portland, the OCA is entering African-American churches and writing letters to the African-American newspaper to say that homosexuals are trying to take a share

By Greg Tully
Staff Writer

Does anyone here remember the separation of church and state? Or the Bill of Rights?

The efforts of the OCA, the candidacy of Pat Robertson and several other political movements in the past few years have amounted to nothing but infringing on the rights of those who do not belong to certain wings of the Christian religion.

Take, for example, the ballot measure in Washington state last fall. It sought to give people the right to die if they were terminally ill. It was defeated, solely due to the efforts of religious groups who felt it was sacrilegious to do so.

This basically forces families, who may have differing views with their church, or be Jewish, or atheist, to spend their entire life savings, or more, to keep a relative alive and suffering.

This is nothing more than religious persecution. The very reason this country was formed was so that our forefathers could escape such tyranny.

To tell me that I have no right to let a loved one die, but that I must spend money in vast quantities so that that loved one may suffer incredible agony for a few weeks longer, just because that is the belief of YOUR church, is criminal.

The pro-choice movement has been largely funded and manned by the same people who defeated that ballot measure.

You may believe what you wish on abortion, but to go around telling others that they must submit to the religious beliefs of the majority is another example of religious persecution.

Further, the tactics, which have included abusing young girls and acts which are illegal, is a good example of just what type of people we are dealing with here.

A good example of just how ridiculous the beliefs of some of these people gets, take the words of Robertson. Good ole' Pat said

in 1988 that abortion was wrong because it "robbed the country of potential taxpayers." Good thinking, Pat.

It is also interesting to note that the party the religious groups flock to is the Republican party. Isn't it odd to back the party that has done nothing for the environment? This has led to the destruction of "God's" Earth and the genocide of "God's" creatures.

I say all this not to put down Christian religions, but to show my disgust at what the leaders of some of these religious groups have done. These people seem to think that their beliefs are correct and that gives them a licence to trample on the rights of religious minorities.

If this continues, we will be no better than the government of South Africa. As they believed that blacks deserved no rights, we will destroy the rights of those who don't conform to the religious mainstream.

The latest example of this oppression is the OCA. Using the same propaganda that's been used by other Christian Right political movements, they seek an agenda that amounts to nothing but a religious fanatic mandate.

In a campaign reminiscent of David Dukke's, they seek to have the Oregon Constitution amended to declare that homosexuality is an abnormal behavior, and they want to defeat parental leave rights (which sounds like forcing women to be "barefoot and pregnant" to me) and to abolish state-aided pre-kindergarten programming because it was not "traditional family values."

All this group stands for is a far-right, gay-bashing, religious persecution movement.

Just as the youth of this country got behind Martin Luther King in the '60's, it is now time to stand up for the rights of religious minorities in the '90's.



Support the Citizens for a Hate Free Oregon.

abuse brought upon American attempting to proliferate their au- tification of God. Also, the burning organizations (such as the KKK) to