

DeLay hits bottom

Tom DeLay announces he will not run for reelection, to the joy of many

David Stark

The Clackamas Print

Tom DeLay's decision to drop out of the electoral race is truly unsurprising due to his stunningly fast fall from grace.

His announcement to leave was full of confusing statements that seemed to not only contradict each other, but also certain portions of the constitution.

When asked if he had ever done anything illegal or unethical while in office, DeLay curtly replied "no." But when asked if he'd done anything immoral he said that "we're all sinners." Now, in my book, immoral and unethical pretty much mean the same thing. So I'm forced to wonder which among his rather long lists of sins he committed.

Of course, given the fact that two of his aides have plead guilty to committing crimes while being members of his staff, one need not wonder too hard. Can anyone else say "aiding and abetting?"

When the celebrations of his departure were over, the press finally asked why we got some interesting answers.

"I'm a realist. I've been around awhile. I can evaluate political situations," DeLay said. "I feel that I could have won the race. I just felt like I didn't want to risk the seat and that I can do more on the outside of the House (of Representatives) than I can on the inside right now." Coming from a man with his

past, I've got to say, that worries me a little.

But I have digressed, where was I? Ah yes, coward runs away.

When asked what he planned to do in the future, DeLay vowed to pursue aggressive speaking and organizing campaigns aimed at promoting foster care, Republican candidates and a closer connection between religion and government.

Hmmm, a closer connection between religion and the government. My recollection is telling me that the Establishment Clause

of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America says, quite concisely, "no." And to change that, we'd need an amendment. Now where in the government can we find a religious fanatic with no idea what's good for the country? Correct me if I'm wrong, but wasn't one of those elected to the presidency?

With a future rife with problems and a political history we all hope is truly over, I have only this to say to DeLay, don't let the door hit you on the way out.

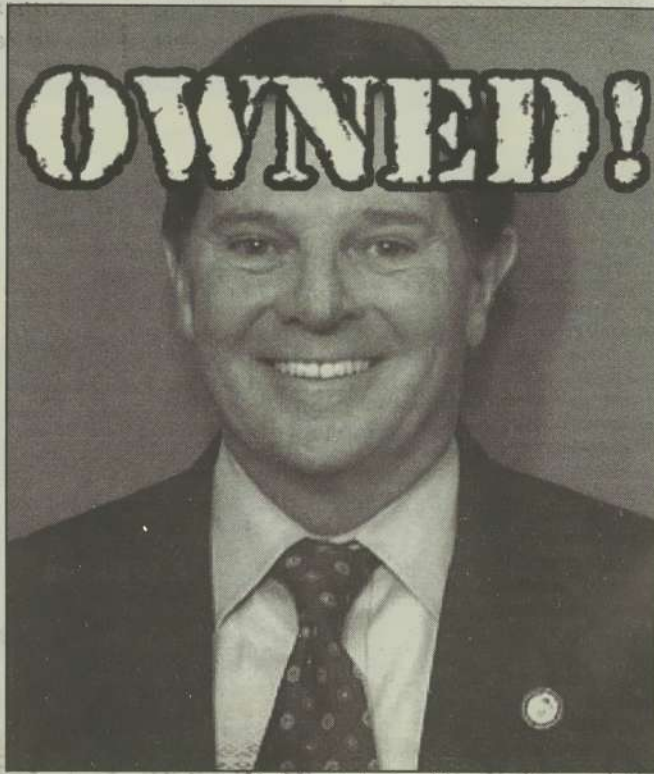


Photo illustration by Jeff Sorensen Clackamas Print

Canadian bill would limit speech

Elizabeth Hitz

The Clackamas Print

Hate speech: the new hot topic. There is an ongoing battle between zealous religious groups and the far left in Canada over whether or not a new amendment to the Canadian Human Rights Act impedes the free speech of those who are anti-homosexual.

On one hand the bill basically states that no one can be treated differently due to age, sex, minority, sexual orientation, etc. No problem. The U.S. has similar laws, as do many countries with human rights bills.

However, the Canadian bill also states that, "It is a discriminatory practice to publish or display before the public or to cause to be published or displayed before the public any notice, sign, symbol, emblem or other representation that (a) expresses or implies discrimination or an intention to discriminate, or (b) incites or is calculated to incite others to discriminate."

This statement seems so completely general that it could be applied to almost anything. Where is the line drawn if you put that kind of broad limitation on speech?

I'm not saying Canada is headed for "1984," but the lack of boundaries scream 'abuse' just waiting to happen.

Nevertheless, the idea has merit. No more mobs picketing in the streets, no more class room drama due to "religious persecution."

The U.S. Constitution has no limitations when it comes to hate speech. All speech in general is labeled free speech.

So which is better: total freedom of speech, with free rein abuse of the liberty, or limitations with the chance of suppressing the religious views of some minorities?

As an American, I have been raised with the idea of free speech as an American tradition and the concept that all men are equal and therefore have the right to free speech, no matter their religious or moral views. I believe I can back that concept

with a reasonable idea of why free speech is not an outdated thread in the weave of society's fiber.

Somehow the concept of free speech seems more realistic (sorry left-wing Canadians). Free speech is more realistic because it better reflects the nature of humanity, which is this: no one sees things the same way.

That diversity, for better or worse, is the foundation of civilization - a series of checks and balances. Extremes balance each other out. In politics, liberals balance or cancel out the conservatives when it comes to the issues of either side.

The same idea could be applied to society. Those who are anti-homosexual balance or cancel the effect that homosexuals as a minority have the potential to wield.

I do not personally condone hate speech, but I do feel it is a necessary evil. However distasteful one side may find the other, they both serve a higher purpose in our society - that of checks and balances.

A few facts about marijuana

According to the Canadian Medical Association Journal and Dr. Peter Fried, marijuana does not contribute to a decreased IQ.

The Center for Medical Cannabis Research at UC San Diego School of Medicine says long term and daily use does not cause permanent brain damage.

An Israeli study suggests cannabonoids help humans recover from physical brain injuries.

"The therapeutic potential of cannabis" raises the possibility that many schizophrenics may be using marijuana to self-medicate because recent evidence suggests that cannabonoids help regulate dopamine according to Lancet Neurology.

The American Nurses Association has adopted a resolution calling for safe access to medicinal marijuana for patients under appropriate supervision.

A German study published in *Nature* suggests that cannabonoids may be useful in extinguishing traumatic memories.

Studies at the Center for Medical Cannabis Research, University of California (San Diego), found that long-term and daily use of marijuana does not cause permanent brain damage.

Compiled by Sam Krause, The Clackamas Print

Schools sue state over funding blues

Blame for school budget problems finally falls to the responsible party

Laura Cameron

Commentary Editor

The Oregon Legislature is being sued by six school districts and three families for failing to adequately fund Oregon schools.

Well, it's about bloody time!

As I have stated before in this paper, the massive budget shortfalls routinely faced by our schools are squarely the fault of the Legislature. When Multnomah County passed the I-Tax back in 2002, we were promised that it was just to tide schools over while the Legislature worked out the school funding problem. Three years later the tax ran out as planned, and the Legislature hadn't done a single damn thing, leaving Oregon schools in even worse straights than they'd been in before.

Now, it appears that our incompetent Legislature is getting its just desserts.

The lawsuit, filed in Multnomah County Circuit Court in mid-March, hinges on the passage of Measure 1 back in 2000. Measure 1

was a constitutional amendment requiring legislators to adequately fund a sweeping program aimed at improving education.

Known as the Quality Education Model, it projected a cost of \$7.1 billion over a two-year period to pay for the smaller classes, better technology and extra training for teachers that the State wanted. That is \$1.86 billion less than the Legislature slated for schools for 2005-2007.

It would appear that our dear, Republican-controlled Legislature has forgotten that they are bound by the Oregon Constitution just like the rest of us. As they will now be learning in court, they cannot pick and choose which amendments to obey and which to ignore.

I wonder how the various legislators coming up for re-election this year will spin this lawsuit in their campaign ads? After all their talk about supporting schools the last time we voted the bums in, it is now painfully clear that it was nothing more than talk. Perhaps this lawsuit will force them to get off their lazy butts and do more than just talk.

You hear that, Oregon legislators? That's the sound of responsibility stepping up and slapping you in the face.

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