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PAT LAVIS

President Bush's election and the Democratic Party's losses were expected and the result of a well executed molding of voter opinions.

As I analyze the political history, it becomes clear that the first thing the Republican Party did was gain media control and then in a very slow and subtle, almost subliminal crusade, focused on the perception of the concept of *liberal*. The word was demonized so that there would be a connotation that a liberal was dangerous to the United States. Realizing that this may not be enough to carry them to victory in an election, the next step was to find social or other patriotic issues that could be used, ergo the argument that anyone in favor of same sex marriages or who supported the U.S. Supreme Court decision of *Roe v Wade*, was someone you must not trust; these people are dangerous. The connotation of a demon was shifted to free-thinking Americans who supported these decisions.

Following the terrorists' attacks on the Twin Towers and the rush to security, the Constitution of the United States was forgotten and under Attorney General Ashcroft, approximately 4,000 American aliens and citizens of Arab descent were detained for a considerable time. They *might* be connected to the terrorists. All have now been released. There were no convictions of any of those taken into custody. This blanket violation of Constitutional rights was justified under homeland security. Anyone who opposed this could also be labeled a demon to democracy. A patriot who stood up and said the Constitution needs to be protected or who opposed the policy of the Administration or who spoke out defending Constitutional rights was labeled unpatriotic, or even evil. This connection carried the election.

Unfortunately this election will also be an historical controversy in the history of the United States. It appears there were precincts where there were more votes for President Bush than there were voters in the district. I do not know whether or not this would make any change but I believe we should be enlightened on the reality of voting practices in this election, even though it is obvious that it will not change the course of history for the next four years.

I have a silent prayer that every American will realize that democracy is something we must safeguard at home and that free and open elections are the battlecry for 2008. Ask citizens to understand the fact that people with diverse views are not demons. Do not polarize your thoughts on a single issue where you lose respect and tolerance for your fellow citizens. I personally have never considered any of the opponents of Ballot Measure 36 as being unacceptable as my fellow citizens and I feel they have every right to their position. I would simply ask the same understanding for all of those who do not embrace that position or every act of this government.

For it is by questioning government that the government is challenged to remain true to the principles of the republic.

BILL OF RIGHTS PARED TO MANAGEABLE 6 FROM THE ONION

Flanked by key members of Congress and his administration, President Bush has approved a streamlined version of the Bill of Rights that pares its 10 original amendments down to a "tight, no-nonsense" 6.

A Republican initiative that went unopposed by congressional Democrats, the revised Bill of Rights provides citizens with a "more manageable" set of privacy and due-process rights by eliminating four amendments and condensing and/or restructuring five others. The 2nd Amendment, which protects the right to keep and bear arms, was the only article left unchanged.

Calling the historic reduction "a victory for America," Bush promised that the new document would do away with "bureaucratic impediments to the flourishing of democracy at home and abroad."

"It is high time we reaffirmed our commitment to this enduring symbol of American ideals," Bush said. "By making the Bill of Rights a tool for progress instead of a hindrance to freedom, we honor the true spirit of our nation's forefathers."

The 4th Amendment, which long protected citizens' homes against unreasonable search and seizure, was among the eliminated amendments. Also stricken was the 9th Amendment, which stated that enumeration of certain constitutional rights does not result in the abrogation of rights not mentioned.

"Quite honestly, I could never get my head around the 9th Amendment anyway," said former House Majority Leader Dick Armey (R-TX), a leading advocate of the revised Bill of Rights. "So goodbye to that one."

Amendments 5 through 7, which guaranteed the right to legal counsel in criminal cases, and guarded against double jeopardy, testifying against oneself, biased juries, and drawn-out trials, have been condensed into Super Amendment 5: The One About Trials.

(Outgoing) Attorney General John Ashcroft hailed the slimmed-down Bill of Rights as "a positive step."

"We are not taking away personal rights, we are increasing personal security," he said. "The Bill of Rights will now offer expanded personal freedom whenever they are deemed appropriate and unobtrusive to the activities necessary to effective operations of the federal government."

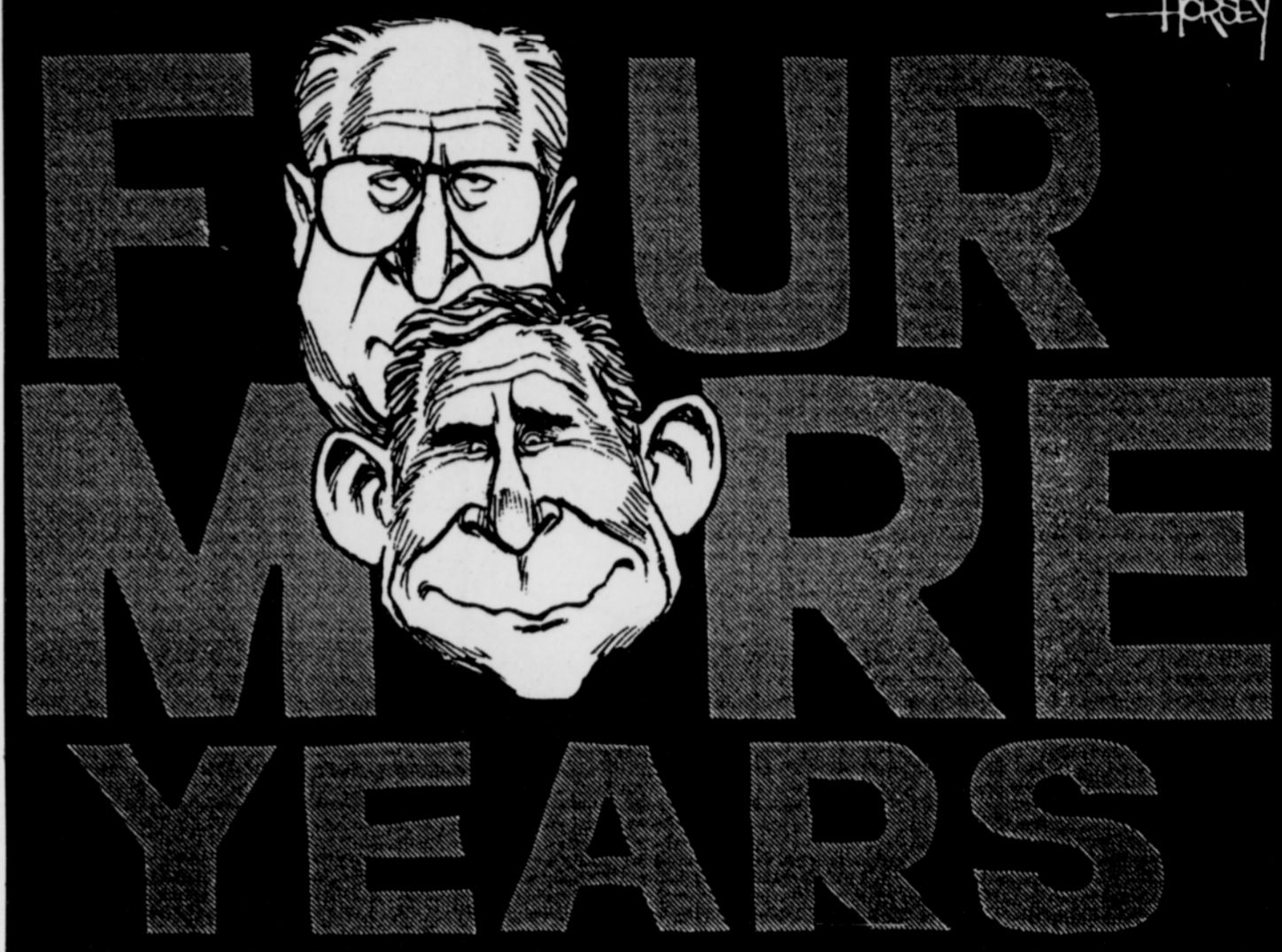
According to U.S. Senator Larry Craig (R-ID), the original Bill of Rights, though well-intentioned, was "seriously outdated."

"The United States is a different place than it was back in 1791," Craig said. "As visionary as they were, the framers of the Constitution never could have foreseen, for example, that our government would one day need to jail someone indefinitely without judicial review."

The President agreed. "Ten was just too much of a handful," Bush added. "Six civil liberties are more than enough."

The Onion is a famous satirical weekly distributed nationally.

THE THREE MOST FRIGHTENING WORDS...



DAVID HORSEY

MONICA TAYLOR

Bush's administration is attacking Social Security, the environment and civil rights, and he is spreading fear with the war on terrorism. I think this strategy is to distract everyone's attention away from the most vitally important point. It's like lighting fires everywhere to smoke-screen the most important focus for a democracy, which is to secure accountable election equipment and legislation. The "new election computers," like Diebold's election software systems, are in question.

Thirty to forty states used these new computers. The prominent computer election software companies are Diebold, Election Systems & Software (ES&S), VoteHere and Sequoia.

Some of the problems that I am aware of are:
~The computers and software are privately owned and copyrighted, which makes them politically influenceable and not inspectable.

~The computers produce no voter-inspected paper ballot for independent recount and audit and are essentially illegal in most states.

~The Diebold systems have been tested and proved hackable in at least six different ways; the total vote can be changed by remote control.

~We do not have legislation adequate for the new equipment. The Secretary of States of Florida and Ohio withheld the internal tracking systems, which were needed to authenticate the computer election results. So there is no proof they were not tampered with.

Dozens of computer experts are alarmed by the use of the new election computers. The computers and software are privately copyrighted. Dan Spillane and Avi Rubin are computer design scientists who worked for VoteHere and Diebold, respectively. Both warned that their companies' touch-screen election computers are not acceptable in elections.

Some other computer experts who have given warning:
~The information Security Institute at the Johns Hopkins University, computer specialists who studied Diebold machines in Maryland.

~Dr. Bev Harris, Ph.D., author of *Black Box Voting*.
~Dr. Rebecca Mercuri, computer voting virtuoso.
~Dr. Roxanne Jabot, computer programmer for 20+ years and teacher, who did a line-by-line review of Diebold's program and found "enough to stand your hair on end."

~Dr. James Gundlach, statistical analyst and sociology instructor at Auburn University, Alabama.

~The Voting Technology Project Team, a joint venture of Massachusetts and California Institutes of Technology.

~John Zogby, arguably the most reliable pollster in the United States.

~Dr. Dan Wallace, Rice University computer science professor.

~Chuck Herrin, Ph.D., holder of multiple highest-level certifications in the areas of computer networking, engineering, auditing and security.

~Arlene S. Ash, Ph.D., Statistician.
~New Jersey Representative Rush Holt, Ph.D.,

physicist.

We do need to be alarmed that the present regime is trying to sweep this issue under the carpet. The people of Ohio are aware and they are angry.

No other state's election system is as good as Oregon's, as long as we continue to insist that voter registration rolls and election counting are both controlled locally at the county level. But we must be concerned about national elections.

MICHAEL G. HOROWITZ

Karl Rove cobbled a domestic coalition of Traditional Capital, Militarism & Evangelism. But it's a coalition that might fray. To begin with, Traditional Capital has habitually allied with science and technology — not theology (which may explain why the *Economist* endorsed Kerry). Militarism has always been awkward in America, especially for endless engagement (which may explain why Pat Robertson publicly recalled his personal warning to Bush regarding Iraq; and the haunting Kerry refrain — "We go to war because we have to, not because we want to."). There is also economic penalty associated with endless engagement that might eventually concern Traditional Capital. And standing on the sidelines are the carping Blues, which, even officially, failed by just 120,000 votes in Ohio to command the Electoral College.

LAREE JOHNSON

Bush and Cheney for four more wars....

DAVID AMBROSE

Sadly Bush will continue his no-tax and max-spend policy into the future. With the increasing debt, either interest rates will rise or the dollar will tank against other currencies.

Unfortunately, the Republicans in Congress will not see the political danger in following Bush and hold onto their

pet projects for their constituencies, keeping the present trend of higher government spending chugging along.

Fortunately, the majority of voters will finally see the ineptness with which Bush has managed our financial and foreign policy.

Let's let Bush and his no-tax and max-spend cohorts chase their dreams of world democracy for a few years. After all, it's your and my grandchildren who will have to bail America out.

JO GOZA

I didn't realize I had hoped so much for Bush to lose that when my hopes collapsed, so have I for awhile.

JOANNE HALVERSON

A gross injustice has been perpetrated against the proportion of conscientious citizens who voted with a belief in democratic elections.

I think the consequences of this election will be further disenfranchising of the American people from democracy while empowering corporate dismantlement of the fundamental concepts of the Constitution. We will see savage labor policies, corrupt business practices and the sabotage of education, health care and Social Security.

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