

Obama's remaking of America - HUMAN EVENTS

Anyone who believes America's culture wars are behind her should have started out Friday reading The Washington Times.

The headlines on the three top stories on page one read:

"California judges asked to say if they are gay."

"'Tebow Bill' for home-schoolers dies in Virginia Senate panel."

"Opt-out on birth control defeated in Senate."

The California judges story dealt with the lately passed Judicial Appointments Demographic Inclusion Act, which mandates a survey of all of the state's 1,600 judges -- to find out how many are homosexual.

Purpose of the law: "Promote and increase the representation of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in the ... judicial branch."

The questionnaire sent to the judges asked each to identify themselves by race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation.

Forty percent of the judges balked, refusing to reveal their sexual orientation. One percent said they were gay. One percent said they were lesbian. One judge identified himself as transgendered.

Welcome to 21st century America.

Under the old American ideal, the lawyers who proved the most qualified by wisdom and experience were to be elevated to the bench.

The new ideal is that California's judiciary should mirror the diversity of the state. Whites, Asians, Hispanics, males, females, blacks, gays, straights and bisexuals are to be represented on the bench in the proportion that they are found in the population.

Yet another triumph of diversity over excellence.

Were an Olympic team or symphony orchestra to be chosen on the basis of this kind of diversity, they would be a joke.

The "Tebow Bill," named for Denver Broncos quarterback Tim Tebow, who played high school football while being home-schooled, was crafted to allow home-schooled Virginia kids to try out for the tennis, football, baseball and basketball teams at their local high schools.

The Virginia House approved the measure 59-39.

But a Senate panel sank the Tebow Bill on an 8-7 vote, denying 38,000 Virginia home-schoolers their last chance to play high school sports. Every Democrat on the panel voted as the Virginia Education Association dictated.

But it is the top story in the Times, about the 51-48 defeat of the Blunt Amendment, that best reveals the shifting correlation of forces in the religious and cultural wars sundering the country.

The amendment of Sen. Roy Blunt would have assured Catholic institutions and Catholic employers of their freedom to opt out of providing health insurance coverage for contraception, abortifacients and sterilizations for employees, if they have religious objections.

The position of the Catholic Church on this issue is neither new nor is it unknown. It was reaffirmed in 1968 in the famous encyclical "Humanae Vitae" of Pope Paul VI. Artificial birth control is unnatural and immoral. This is high among the beliefs that differentiate Catholic teaching from other Christian faiths.

Nor is it any secret. And any government that orders Catholic institutions and employers, against their religious beliefs, to provide contraceptives, "morning after" pills or sterilizations for employees has crossed the line between church and state to trample upon the First Amendment religious freedom it was established to protect.

Sandra Fluke, a 30-year-old student at Georgetown Law School, has emerged as the

heroine of the Democratic establishment, being phoned by President Obama after her excoriation by Rush Limbaugh.

And what is Fluke's demand? That Georgetown University pay for and provide birth control for herself and all coeds and law school students.

Consider if you will the chutzpah on display here.

Fluke attends one of the most prestigious law schools in America. She is among a cognitive elite whose future is secure. Why should she not pay for her own birth control, even if she has to borrow money? Why is providing her birth control someone else's obligation?

This is not an abandoned woman on welfare. Why should other students or the university be forced to foot the bill for Fluke's exercise of her freedom to pursue her personal lifestyle? She has talked of \$3,000 a year being the annual cost of birth control for a Georgetown student.

Georgetown University and its law school presumably remain Jesuit institutions. For Fluke to demand contraceptives or birth control pills for herself and her fellow students is to demand that Georgetown enable and subsidize behavior the church and the Jesuit community teach to be immoral.

Fluke has an extraordinary sense of entitlement.

Undeniably this episode, where the Democratic Party, traditional political home of America's Catholics, is now demanding that Catholic institutions and employers be forced to subsidize what their church teaches to be immoral conduct, tells us much about the sea change that has taken place and is taking place across America.

The America of Barack Obama that is emerging appears to be a country where civil disobedience may yet become a duty of traditional Christians and devout Catholics.

The historian Arthur Schlesinger Sr. once called anti-Catholicism "the deepest-held bias in the history of the American people."

In Obama's Washington, it is becoming so again.