

(Tape turn over)

... and of our movement, and I think I disagree with that. When you hear the people that have spoken already, you realize that there is an enormous community of humanity out there, of people who are very much in favor of allowing people to investigate and find your own holiness, and to find your own lives, and to make those investigations for themselves.

And as Matthew pointed out, we do need to find common cause with these people. I think the great unmentionable evil that is at the center of all of this, is mon____theism. That is, that there is only, there is one God, and only one God, and everyone else had better get out of the way. From a very ancient bronze age text, known as the Old Testament, three religions evolved. We saw Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Now these are all, these are neither bad nor good, in and of themselves, the way I look at them. But, there are the sky God religions. These are the patriarchal group with the omnipotent Father. And of course, that's why we've seen, for the past 2,000 years, in all the countries where this sort of sky God predominates, there is so much hatred of women. Because, in fact, what has happened, is that these

religions have been interpreted to keep women in a specific place. And this God, this sky God as I call him, and I separate this sky God from what I think many of us here believe to be the true manifestation of what spirituality is.

But the sky God is a jealous God. He requires total obedience from everyone on earth. And He is in place, not just for one side or one group, but for all of creation. Those who would reject Him must be converted, or killed, for your own good, for their own good. And ultimately, totalitarianism is the only sort of politics that can truly serve the sky God's purpose. Any movement of a liberal nature, any movement of a thoughtful nature endangers His authority, and that of, all of His delegates on earth.

Now, the founders of the -- to be more secular for a minute -- the founders of the United States were not particularly enthusiasts of the sky God. Many, like Jefferson, rejected Him altogether, and placed people -- people meaning mankind, or people, human kind, sorry, I ____ forget this term, but people, and humanity, at the center of the world.

Even a very young Abe Lincoln wrote a pamphlet once against organized Christianity, which his friends persuaded him to burn.

So, from the beginning, the sky God supporters have

exerted great pressure on our secular republic. Those are our roots in this country, and they have exhorted enormous pressure, and enormous havoc and damage in our communities.

For that reason, we see ourselves as the pamphlets describe, as the fighting the right. And yet, I personally don't like this fight. To fight the right implies that we are a godless, or a faithless community, because we're fighting these people who are somehow impued, or endowed with God, and the rest of us are not. And of course, as you heard before, we have our own spirituality in this community, our own holiness, and I think it is very important for all of us to keep that.

There is -- I personally reject the notion that to be gay or lesbian means that one must reject Christianity, or for that matter, as my own point of view, any other religion or faith. You don't need to project Christianity, or Judaism, or Islam. What we must project is the sky God's version of all of these states, (audience clapping). All the people who are seated here are proof that there is decency and humanity in the religious community, even as all of you who are out there know that it is there.

Now, it's usual on rare occasions, when we talk about really essential problems, to exhort everyone to be kinder and gentler, I think you've heard that before, and to bring

us together, oh Lord, in our common humanity. Well, we've heard these exhortations for a couple of hundred years now, and frankly, we're further apart than ever before.

In the recent Presidential election, ah, there was an essay that was written by Gore B_____, who compared Jerry Brown as candidate and Pat Buchanan as candidate. And I'm just sort of leave you with this last thought.

Gore B_____ said, you know, that Buchanan actually speaks for the party you've got, the sky God, with the terrible hatred of women, and of Black, and gay men and lesbians, and of drugs, and abortion, and contraception, and gambling, you name it, he hates it. Buchanan is a worthy peddler of the case. He is in harmony, not only with the President, he is in harmony with a good deal of the prejudices of many communities in the United States.

Gore B_____ also goes on and compares Jerry Brown and says, you know, Jerry kind of speaks for the party of humanity, the family of people, of human beings. Thomas Paine, when asked of his religion said that he in fact owns the religion of humanity.

Now, the political party of humanity needs to keep in mind that what we must do, is establish a representative government, firmly based in the Bill of Rights. That is the great equalizer for our country. We can choose whatever

religion we want, and whatever belief we want, but the Bill of Rights have got to be our t_____, (audience clapping).

The party of God doesn't want any of this, it wants to establish through legal prohibitions, and enforce taboos, a sky God totalitarian state. Imagine, if you will, the United States, ultimately as a prison, with mandatory blood, urine, and lie detector tests, and with the sky God people as the cops, answerable only to God. I would suggest that we cannot permit this. I would suggest that what we must do is wrap ourselves in the Constitution, and continue our fighting. Thank you, (audience clapping).

Hi guys. I guess I just wanted to start out by saying that the way that I express my spirituality is, through my community of radical fairies, and it's a very different thing than Christianity. But it gives me that center, and you know, it works for me, and for my brothers.

What I'd like to do tonight, is quite a bit different than what's gone on before. I want to talk a little bit about, about our community, and about what's been going on in our community, how we've been organizing. And I think more importantly, how we've been failing to organize in a way that's going to really counteract, you know, what's been

going on with the right wing. Because like what's been said here earlier, it is a pluralistic society, I mean, you know, we can't just, we can't just back down and expect that that's going to work. With what we've got organized now, we're going to have to do more. '93, I think it's fair to say, has been like in some ways, our worst year in a really long time. I mean, in a way, you know, it seemed at the beginning, it was going to be like our best year, you know, we've arrived, we've made it, we're trendy.

And now, it's not that, you know. And in light, in six months, you know, we just went down the tubes somehow. And just to be inciple let me suggest even that, you know, we may have been better off letting Bush be reelected for a second term, because what do we have now, you know, from the Clinton Presidency, and that is, and from our own feelings, and that is that the military ban is essentially the same old thing, wrapped around some nice jargon, and it's been now codified, making it all that more difficult to get rid of when the, you know, when we are more organized.

And, because of the fallout from that plummeting, that we took in the congress in these last six months, is it's going to be ten to fifteen years now, I believe, before there is any hope of us being able to pass a national civil rights bill. And that's from the fallout from being troused so

severely in this last year. And how were we troused? We were troused, because we were way outmaneuvered, and way out organized by the religious right. They're the folks who went out there, who beat on the doors of congress, and made it happen for them, and against us.

I want to talk a little bit about what I see happening in the last few years. The march on Washington, in 1987, I think, was a water shed for our community. It was the first time that we had a great amount of visibility with each other, even though the media didn't report us. So what we did is, we all went back, and a lot of us got really active in a much more militant way. And for those of us who at least were involved with groups like Q_____tion, and Act Up, our strategy was to say, "Well, you know, there is really about 2,000 of us around the whole country, what are we going to do to get the media's attention?" You know we don't have, there is no real grass roots large scale movement going on here, how are we going to get the attention of the American public for our concerns?

And so what we did is, we thought, well, you know, we just have to pull some big stunts, something that's really going to create a media circus, that's going to make us visible. And we succeeded in doing that, that was our strategy and it worked. It worked phenomenally well, and it

put the lesbian and gay community on the map, as we have never been before. All of a sudden now, there are articles in the newspapers all the time, we're always on television, and people know about us, and they're thinking about us, and they're talking about us.

So we did, we created the illusion of a broad base movement. We didn't have a broad base movement, but we made people think that we have one. And even President Clinton bought into it, you know, and he said, "Oh well, you know, they raised a million dollars, and there must be millions of them, and they're giving me money, and they're going to all vote for me, and surely we can pull off this military thing."

The thing is, you know, and, and in all fairness, you know, the Act Up _____ kind of tactics, at least I think have created some change. You know, we have a Liz Smith, we have a David G_____. They've gone from apathy, and now they're taking strong stands on behalf of our community.

You know, we came out, we accused Hollywood of being homophobic, now they're making Philadelphia, they're making Mayor of Castro Street, and hopefully a lot of other pictures, because of the activism around those issues.

Nevertheless, 1993 does have to stand as clear proof that those tactics that we were using, ultimately failed us. In the end, on the military issue, the Christian right, you

know, really showed us up. What was happening nationally, as we were so, we were so disorganized, that we were looking at the military issue as a, as Barney Frank said, as a campaign with a vote at the end of it, so that we were targeting July, and hoping that well, from you know, from December to July maybe we can get our act together.

But the reality was, is that the right mobilized instantaneously, and in about, within two weeks they had already brought most of the members of congress on to their side. And congress, every member of congress had already made up his or her mind about what he or she was going to do, long, long before July. And yet, we were spending, you know, million dollars, or whatever it was, to run this public relations campaign in popular magazines. And it was really, in my opinion, a big waste of our money, because by that time, it was too late.

The bottom line is, that we have, we haven't organized around tactics that really work, at least in terms of how we relate to Washington, and I'm talking about in a national organizing here, and I think it's very different for states and local communities. But for Washington, there is a very simple organizing principle, and that is that, they aren't reading the polls, they don't care if the polls went up or down a point, or ten points. What they're listening to is

like, their constituents from back home, who are writing them, who are calling them, who are stopping in their office, who are the activists, who are actually involved in the political process. And that's the way Washington works.

So it doesn't matter that, you know, if we even had, if we had 75 percent in the polls, we still would have lost on this issue, because the right wing sent out their war on gays, and everything else that they did, and they got, they got all their people mobilized, they got them mobilized instantaneously, and they came out big against us. And we had come out big in favor of ourselves. And you add up the numbers, and we lose. It's just a ...

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... not even, (audience clapping), of if they would have just written a letter, or picked up the phone and made a phone call, it would have made an enormous difference. And the national organizations, I mean, with a half a million people, at least at that march, that's at much as all of their mailing list put together. Why don't we have a mailing list of all those people? Why did all those people spend, what must it have been, they must have spent, just to get to Washington, and stay in those fabulous hotels, and eat those

fabulous meals, and go to those wonderful discos, they must have spent more money than all the national organizations buttons put together, (audience clapping). I mean, if we have that money, and we weren't, you know, if we were using that money the way it needs to be used, I think we'd be a lot better off.

I mean, we really need to get our people together, and really stop playing church battles, you know, in different organizations, and start talking about how we can work together. I think it's _____, (audience clapping).

And the main criticism that I have about our organizations now, nationally, is that they're democratic. And I think that, you know, if you look at them all, the women's movement, and NOW, they vote their, they vote their national leader in, and they have local chapters. Everybody has an opportunity to participate. I'm not a member of NGLTF, I'm not a member of HRCF because I feel like, if I give them money, I'm not going to get anything back for it, I don't get to play. It's like they get to play, but I don't, and they want my money to do it.

I think, I think that we need democracy in our movement. We don't have that now, and we, we don't have, we don't have the visionary visible leaders that other movements have had, and the reason is that without democratic institutions, we

don't build leadership. And with the, with leadership that's based on democratic institutions, the leaders build constitutencies for themselves, and then the constitutencies build leaders. It's a wonderful cycle, and why isn't anybody doing it? Why are, why do we have a movement by boards and directors? Most of these people are conservative, and, and most of these people are conservative, and they're picked to be on these boards because they raise money. And I think that we need, I think we need to, you know, look beyond that.

And one other, the one other thing, the one other approach that I think needs to be taken is that, we need to start building our own media empire. We need to have, we need to have radio, and television stations that we own, just like the right wing has the radio and television stations that they own, that they own.

Now, yes, it's very expensive to do that, and we haven't built the base to pay for it yet, perhaps, but look. We've got G_____ now, you know, we've got a G_____, and now he likes us. So, you know, he's, he's got \$500,000,000, so he can spare three or four to buy us a TV station. What about Barry Giller, if he doesn't get Paramount, can't he buy us one little TV station? I don't see why not, (audience clapping).

So, and sound like this, I just want to say, you know,

let's take the long vision, and let's take the long road. Let's think big, enough of this penny anny stuff, and if we do that, if we slowly build, emulating the right wing, over the next fifteen years, do what they did, we'll have big nasty organizations that can pull, that won't pull punches with congress. And in fifteen years, we will have a civil rights bill that we can, that we can get passed. Thank you, (audience clapping).

First, the preachers, and then the, then the lawyers, what's wrong with this picture? (laughter). And where are thee _____ in this deal? I mean, looking at it as the time actually will be brief, because I think that the value of this meeting is the dialogue that we have with each other, not so much what we, at this table, can share with you. Because I suspect that most of you know at least as much as any of us.

But there are a few things that run across my mind in this discussion. One of them is really the issue around building a movement. And when I was called to talk at this meeting this evening, on what are the issues, I kept thinking, and I kept thinking, and I kept thinking and I got confused, because you know, the issues seem to me to be the

same as I've always felt them to be. And I don't know if I just got stuck, you know, and have missed all the changes that have happened, or if maybe we just haven't done the things that we should have been doing all along, whatever.

Now, obviously, you know, the issue of coalition, the issue of understanding that gay and lesbian liberation must be in the concept of a humane movement, for a more progressive society, more caring, a more loving society.

And with that in mind, you know, I think one of the fundamental things, one of the most powerful things that we must do is the same thing that many of us have been saying all along. And that is to come out, you know. Now, if each and everyone of us came out, you know, that would have a monumental impact on our movement. You know, if all of our families know who we were, (audience clapping).

And I understand that many of us don't come out for fear of rejection. Now, my response to that is, people can't love you if they don't know you. You know, it's not possible for that to happen, (audience clapping). But, beyond coming out to our families and friends, and I know that many of us, particularly people in this room, are stressed to, you know, as far as they can be stressed. But we need to demonstrate our presence in the other progressive movements.

You know, every time we work, as openly gay and lesbian

people, and the choice movement, you know, we move forward in the movement of liberation for gay and lesbian people. Every time we work as openly gay and lesbian people, and the movement, and homelessness, and hunger, and in the civil rights movement, and all of those organizations, and all of those entities, and all that progressive struggle, we move forward in gay and lesbian issues, (audience clapping), and I think that's important.

You know, we're focusing on the, these initiatives around the country, this anti-gay initiatives. And you know, there's a part of me that feels that it's not so important that they're anti-gay initiatives, and the message that we need to be clear about, that what's wrong with these initiatives is that they're pro-, pro-discrimination initiatives. Now because that's the connection, that's the connection. Now that's what is wrong with them. Not so much that they're anti-gay, and not that that's not a bad thing, but what is really wrong with them, is that they fundamentally violate the true principles of this country, the principles about equality, the principles about liberation, the principle, the principle about in_____. And those are the messages that we need to speak to, (audience clapping).

Finally, no, within our own communities, we never, we

need to never ever cease focusing on the diversity within our midst. Now, and understanding that it is absolutely imperative that we create a safe state for all people within our communities. Because as long as our communities, (audience clapping), are not safe for women, as long as our communities are not safe for people of color, those people cannot be foot soldiers for the progression of a gay and lesbian _____, (audience clapping).

I recently got back from a trip to Berlin, and this actually has been my fourth trip to Berlin since February of 1990. And I keep going back to Berlin, because the process of the wall coming down, and for some reason, now it, it speaks of such a powerful metaphor for me. And in the last year of so, obviously we've read about the skin heads in Germany, and what's happening around that. And what's interesting, because I spent time in Berlin this time, and other parts of East Germany, is that when you look at what's happening with the skin head in East Germany, and, and where the message is, of their hate comes from, it comes from the same places as the messages of hate from all intolerant people all over the planet. Now it's the same message.

And now, so the thing that I'm mindful of, is that, you know, the Jerry Falwell of the '60s, now who opposed integration, is the same Jerry Falwell of the '90s, who puts

out a war on gay and lesbian people. You know, the same Jesse Helms, is the same Jesse Helms. You know, the Strum Thurman, you know, who felt that it was okay to sic dogs, and to hold down black children. Now, the same Strum Thurman who spoke out against Anita Hill, is the same Strum Thurman who spoke out against any discrimination in the military. They're the same people, (audience clapping).

And we need to be mindful of that, because one of the latest tactics of the fanatic right, is to in fact, go after the logical coalition of people of color, and women, and gay and lesbian, and all oppressed people. Now, and they're actively, and now courting Black churches around this country, for example, and really undermining the fundamental principles of a Black civil rights movement. You know, the survivor of Black folks in this country, has been our fundamental understanding of our responsibility to care for each other, and to love each other. And the radical right is undermining that, and they're wedging in that community.

And it's for some of those reasons that we need to be clear about our movement being about I _____, and about loving, and caring for each other.

In closing, I guess, you know, the thing that I would leave you with, is that in the final analysis, actually I would say there are two things that I want to mention before

I step down, is as we talked about what we haven't done, and there are lots of things that we haven't done, and I kind of want to challenge two things that Nicki said. That there are lots of things that we need to do. But we also need to be mindful that something else has been going on for the last thirteen years. And we've been dying, and we've been burying our friends and loved ones. Now let's not forget that. That is something else that the religious right has not had to deal with.

And as we deal with these issues about family values, you know, I am reminded of something that happened to me some fourteen years ago. I met a person, I fell in love, we began to build a home and a business, because we were a family. That person got sick, and I took care of him, because we were a family. He died, and we memorialized him, because we were a family. And no one, no one can ever take that away from us, no one, (audience clapping). So, if we ever want to talk about family values, there are no people on the planet that demonstrated family values in the way that we have, in the faith of this _____, (audience clapping).

Let's give all our speakers one more round of applause, thank you. (audience responding).

It is important to get on with the business of dialogue. We've heard lots of things that resinate with each other, and some sharp differences, and some new ones, some serious challenges in differences about where we can go from here. And I think what I'd like to do is invite people to either, to come up to the podium, to line up, to speak, to ask questions of any panelist, as you wish, or to make a statement, or, come up, we have three mics, please come up to one of these three mics, that will make it easier, none of us will have to call on anybody, you can just move across the mics, one, two three. Alright, this way to this way, we're going to do that. And so if you'll each take, we'll ask you to keep your questions or comments to a minute or so, and, in fact, a minute for your question or comment, and then the panelists may respond for a minute or less, if that's okay, we can do that left. So, and, I'll keep time here. And say your name if you wish to, how is that?

Well my name is Pat Mitrichino, and Mel I thank you for your warm endorsement, allowing me to come here. I have a question, and my question is that you refer to the religious right as people who want to take away the lives of the gay and lesbian community. We both know Jerry Falwell, and I've never heard him express anything like that. I mean, there

are some crackpots out there, but I don't know anybody in the religious right that wants to kill homosexuals. That is absolutely (audience booing). I would absolutely stand against anything like that, you know that's -- so, please express yourself on this.

Pat, I have to tell you that the very films that you've made lead to our deaths, (audience clapping). And I say this as, we've been friends for a long time. I just have to say to you that the studies are very clear about how the rhetoric to pay trickles down, so least, both for example there are three times likely a chance for a high school kid who is gay to kill himself than for a heterosexual kid, because the Surgeon General is reported, I mean, the Secretary's report said, because he's surrounded by religious culture that says he's condemned to hell anyway. So that whether I think Jerry wants me dead or not, and I don't think he does. I think he's doing things that lead directly to our death, whatever the reason, we've got to deal with that, (audience clapping).

Alright, my name is James Von, I'm the vice president of the California Log Cabin Club, gay Republicans, for those of you who don't know, (laughter). I want to us to come away with something very practical. Obviously, I'm someone who is

on the front line to fighting the religious right, within the Republican party. And if anything, we learned in the hearings this past summer, is that bigotry is bipartisan. And the thing, thank you. Working from within, working with certain politicians, I work right now for Mayor Richard Riardon, and the one practical thing I'd like you all to walk away with tonight is, how many of you call or wrote Richard Riardon to thank him for being in the Gay Pride Parade, or for appointing an openly gay deputy mayor.

Now you may not be happy with some of the other things he's done. See, unfortunately when we say it's our, their responsibility to do this, we lose out on a lot. I'm not campaigning, please allow me to finish. When we expect people to do things for us, they're not as likely to come out and help us the next time around. When the gay domestic partnership bill comes up before Richard Riardon, and it's going to, what is he going to remember? Those who thanked him, or those from the religious right who called and blasted him for it?

Okay, your time is up.

Actually I would like, I would like to respond to that. I think that, that my political affiliation is probably

pretty well known, and I think that in this room we should hear that, you know. I work in city government, you know, (audience clapping). You know, I'll, in this particular case, you know, the way, if we're going to play politics, whatever game we're going to play, we need to know the rules of that, those, of that game, and play it to win. In this particular case, the new mayor of this city, now has done more on those particular issues than the past mayor, who was a close friend, personal friend of many of us. And we need to acknowledge that, and as political activists, we need to use that in our favor, you know, because that is the way they operate, (audience clapping).

The document that -- so sorry Mark,

That's okay, I met Garin, psychotherapist, former co-chair of the gay and lesbian police advisory task force, and a whole long list of organizations, I won't go into. It's a pleasure to be in the company of these people, all of you here tonight. As a psychotherapist, who is also a Christian, I'm an Episcopalian, I cannot agree more with the comments that have been made tonight about reclaiming our spirituality and the importance of that.

We have allowed our enemies to convince us that we're

not worthy of love. We've played right into their hands, and every time we brush it off, blow it aside, or otherwise ignore the issue, we go right along with them.

That's the first thing we have to stop doing. We have to 'reclaim the fact that God, the universe, whatever, loves us, and wants us to be here, and our political work is absolutely tied to our survival. But not only our survival, but the proliferation of love on this planet.

Your time is up. Thank you.

Hi, I'm Roger Cogian, I'm co-chair of Life Aid Lobby and my question is, what do we do with all this wonderful energy that we have here tonight? How are we going to translate this into some sort of action that helps us? And let me suggest, and I'm not the first person who suggested this, that all politics is local, it starts locally. And tomorrow evening, at 7 o'clock, at the gay and lesbian community service center, where I'm legal services director, we're going to have a regularly scheduled meeting of Life Aid Lobby.

Life, as some of you may know, is the organization that through building coalitions around this state, got passed AB101, and AB2601, which secures the employment rights of

each and everyone of us in this room. And we are organized in terms of a grass roots local level, to effectuate domestic partnerships in the State of California, and from my perspective, let's do something, let's get to the center tomorrow at 7 p.m. Thank you.

Your time is up, thank you.

Rabbi Egar, a discriminative document, which is one of the most significant things to come out of the meeting this evening, the s_____ candidates, they're reeking havoc in the politics of this country, because they run in small areas, where there is not all that much public notice. They've wrecked the school system in Vista, California, simply wrecked it. And that is no courtesy to the children, and to the public education system. Their techniques of spoking out the s_____ candidates. We did it for the Linden R_____ people, we were very good at spoking them out, and we advertised very widely who they were, and urged people not to vote for them, and they didn't get elected office.

However, these folk are getting elected, and there are few things we can do. It is to state candidate forms, the document recommends that. And ask perceptive questions. Insist on a written document, _____ on public issues. And

then next, to socialize with them, to visit them in their homes, to see something about how they live. And find out who they associate with. They have the right to associate with their own kind. But if it is only their own kinds, then -- well, let me close by saying, I believe we really need to study, among ourselves, techniques of defeating the s_____ candidates, because they really are an anti-gay and anti-huminist crowd. Thank you.

As the director of the Center was speaking about six major national organizations, I was a little astonished not to hear the religious community within the gay community mentioned, because I think you'll find that the budgets, not only of the national organization, but of the chapters that make up those national organizations, make a significant part of the budget entrusted for the work of the people within the community. And it's especially interesting to me, as I listen to the panel, to think that that budget comes out of the one institution that has maintained democratic process. My favorite rabbi is not my favorite rabbi because she appointed herself, or because God appointed her, but because a group of people said, this is a person we wish to lead us. And I think that's something that the whole community needs to look at, that we can do the things we need to do, and so

many things are processed. Thank you.

My name is John O'Shell, and I'm a member and lay leader out of the Hollywood United Methodist Church. The red ribbon, it stands 22 feet, at our tower, is not there on Highland and Franklin, because it's politically correct. And I'd like to thank this, the forum here for being here. But it's important that we understand that the community of faith has been in this battle for a long time. And sometimes that is not recognized by the civilian side of our brothers and sisters in the movement.

But this kind of a movement demonstrates that when we come together, it can be a powerful spiritual renewal on this thing. We have people in the churches, and in the synagogues and temples that have been working hard on this issue for a long time. Some of them are no longer with us, we need to recognize that. They're important people to the movement. Their names aren't known, but they -- long before we were here tonight, they fought the battle, and they must be remembered.

This weekend, I want to close with this, I participated in the burial of a five year old child that died of AIDS. The minister turns to me in tears, as he tells me, "John, I have four more that we're going to have to do this for." You

see, this is the real essence of spirituality, how we care for ourselves. And so I think that I want to thank you. But I want to uplift the fact that the churches, and the synagogues, in the community today are there, but we need your help, because we will not allow ourselves to be taken to our _____, in wooden cars, as some of us have said, for our own church leadership. Thank you.

I'm Timothy Kincade. Let me initially say that I was very impressed with the entire panel. And I wanted to comment briefly on your diversity. There are so many different perspectives, and so many different religions were expressed here. However, I think that whenever we go to build our coalitions, we forget the whole concept of diversity. And I would like to encourage us, as we do this, not to exclude people who could be friends. I think one of the worst things we did in trying to overturn the ban, was being very exclusive in who we included, simply because we made assumptions. We never assumed that old, say, Daryl Gates would support us. We never assumed that Barry Goldwater would support us. We assumed that Bill Clinton would, and I think that we need to be extremely cautious, that we don't tell people, "Oh, Richard Riardon, he has to," you know. If they're friends, and they're friends on this

issue only, whatever this issue is, then we should include them. We need to be courting churches, religious churches, extremists churches, because we'll find some out there who are on a very fundamentalists, very basic core, and don't believe in discrimination. We need to be searching for politicians who don't fit our norm. We need to be looking for those people we don't usually show up with in our little coalitions, which kill us.

I just want to respond briefly, that Daryl Gates did not support us. He was on the radio the night that that happened, and I was listening, and he was very clear that he took the military's position on that.

Actually, unless I'm mistaken, it's possible, but I did hear him say that he, on a basis of non-discrimination, thought that the policy was discriminatory, and the night that we had our protest, he was announcing where it was and said, if I were gay, I would be there protesting. So I take that as some measure of support.

We need not to have dialogue back and forth, if some panelists wants to respond, that's okay. Thanks

My name is Ken Bonnell, I'm president of Atheists United. Perhaps many of you know of us. And we are, I represent a whole group of people who are very conscious of the efforts of the religious right to Christianize the country. And I want to call your attention that they are using certain little things like, "under God" in the pledge of allegiance, and "in God we trust" on our money, to prove that, you know, that it's a Christian country, and it's okay for them to put into our civil law their religious ideas.

And I appreciate the panel's bringing a good part of this to the floor.

I'm going to exercise my prerogative as one of the moderators here and ask a question of the panel. And I would like to, actually I would be interested in hearing both Phil and Mel respond to this. One of the things that Dr. White talked about, is some of the out right lies that are perpetrated in some of the literature by the religious right. And you made a statement Mel, that you thought that they were sincere, but sincerely wrong. I think that, I think they certainly are sincerely wrong, but I question their sincerity when they engage in lies that I think we all know they know are lies. And so I would be interested in the perspectives of Phil and Mel on what we do, and how we expose these actual

lies?

In 1979, Jerry Falwell started the Moral Majority. After he read a Francis Shaffer tract about co-belligerance. Francis Shaffer quoted the Old Testament to say that God often "used pagans to do His will." That's a Jerry Falwell quote. Therefore the idea of co-belligerance is based on finding people, whoever they are, whatever they believe, around issues that they share in common. The two main issues that they have shared in common are this kind of primordial hatred of gays, and this kind of mutual abhorrence of abortion. And so those two issues, you see, we being one of them, are the issues that must not be tested, because it holds the whole thing together.

So that when we try to reason with them, we can't reason them out of something they didn't reason themselves into. And so what I see, are the lies just keep coming and coming, they're just plugging into that old stuff, but they have to keep the coalition together, and we're the last way to do it. So how we deal with the lies, whether they are lies or not, is scary, because of this co-belligerent need.

Well, I challenge whether in that, you know, that the war on gays and lesbians is really a war on principle, or

whether or not it's a fund raising mechanism, (audience clapping). And I think that -- to be completely honest, I'm not convinced, if on a principle issue, they really care one way or another. And I guess one of the examples I would give would be for example Randal Terry, and Operation Rescue, whose fundamental mission was initially to close down the family planning clinics. And in January, now their public declaration that says their new mission, now was the issue around homosexuality.

Now, but what is that about? Is it about a way to raise money? Now Jerry Falwell, or any of them, they never ever send out any information without requesting money. Now I think that that's smart, and it obviously works, you know, but certainly the more damaging the pieces that accompanied the request for the money, the bigger the take is. And so I think that we need to be clear about that, and pay attention to that.

(Tape Two)

I'm a Constitutional lawyer working with the American Civil Liberties Union in _____, American way. It's good to be in front of a group that gets applause for their affiliation, (laughter).

About a year ago, I joined a group which became known as the Coalition for Personal Freedom, and I met people like J. Fang, and Mike Reynolds, and John Achoa, and supported by the G_____ Foundation. And our first target, at that time, was the fear that there was going to be a Colorado type anti-gay initiative on the ballot in this state. And I can't say, just because we were meeting privately, but that initiative has yet to come to pass in California. But instead, Proposition 174 is on the ballot in November.

And so our coalition, in the true spirit of a coalition, which has been talked about here, focused it's attention away from the fear of an anti-gay initiative, which we're ready to deal with if we have to, to opposing Proposition 174. And I want to call on each of you, and echo what Rabbi Agar said, that you have to view 174 as an anti-gay initiative. You've got to organize, you've got to educate yourselves, you've got to vote. This is going to be a big election in November. The main thing on the vote in November is Proposition 174. There are not going to be a lot of candidates running, so you've got to get yourself out to vote, because a minority of a minority is going to decide the vote on Proposition 174, and you can be part of the victory to defeat it. Thank you.

My name is Tim C_____, I have a comment/question for

any of you that wants to talk about it. I came here, and I feel really inspired by the amount of people that are here, and I'm real excited about everybody. And I don't mean this in a negative way, but all I keep hearing is victim, victim, victim, like, _____, David G_____ should give us money. Why can't we all just get together and do the money for ourselves? And like, another woman said, Oh well, I shouldn't write, you know, a thank you letter to that, just what he should do.

But if you gave something to someone, you are going to want a letter in return. It's just common courtesy, and I feel like we're acting like victims, and we're not really doing something. With a group of people that we have right here, to really bring us together and say, let's start. Let's start with the group of people that are here, and write letters, or even with the 450,000 people that we have on the list of this organization, send out lists. Don't ask for money, just say, "Look, ask a friend to sign up, or ask a friend to do something for our community." Or even, you people who are here, how come you didn't like bring with you an organization that we can start, the people in this room who want to do something, and start an organization. Because this is, just one more quick thing, because that's what is my biggest frustration. We all know what to say, and we all

know how to say it, but when do we work together as a big group like the right wing? When?

Well, I tackle that first, and certainly echo what you said. I think that we all need to support our organizations, not only with our money, but with our time, and both are important. Of those 500,000 names that are on the list, only 140,000 contribute, alright? That's a very small number, when you consider how many queers there are in this country, we should be having a political machine that has as much money, or ten times more from all these religious right organizations, and we don't.

And I don't think necessarily that we even need new organizations. We have so many organizations that are in place, and have a machine, whether it's of small people, whether it ranges from Land and Legal Defense Fund, to the Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Forum, to the Center, to MCC, to the smallest organizations to the largest. What we need to do is, is vote with our feet and with our pocketbooks because that's the only way we are going to combat the organizations that we're fighting against, and achieve, if it's not even just a reaction, if we move into a pro-active stance that was suggested by some of the other panelists, we have to do that. We have to get away from all these reacting

because that's what motivates people.

When we got people out on the street for the military issue, it was because we've been slammed. We couldn't get people out proactively to start it. And each one of us seems to play a part in that. We need to talk to our friends, we need to talk to ourselves, and spend our time and effort in support of our issue.

I just want to echo what Lori Jean says, because so many people kind of come to town hall meeting, they need to go and deal with an issue that's of interest. But, more than writing checks, though checks certainly what keeps our institutions going, it's also people power. And there are a myriad of organizations in our community that many people in here don't even know about. And you need to go get a _____, in the Yellow Pages, you need to come out to the center and look at the bulletin board, and see all of the many activities that are in our community. And you do need to be there. And that's the thing that we see time and time again, and we saw it with the campaign for military service, the people were just lazy. They were apathetic, they don't care, they're tired of marching, they're tired of reacting.

But the reality is, even if you're not there, we can't do. And we need you, and we want you. And you can't create

democratic institutions if people, if it's the same old people all the time. And so we've got to get, all of you got to bring a friend, come to Roger's meeting at the Center, come to L_____ meeting, come, there's a million organizations, go to one. Everybody here ought to be in one of the organizations that we already have.

I'll be real fast. I'd like to challenge Tim, and all the people that know you, that for example, when you talk about getting involved, and how this is the organization in which people can get involved, my suggestion to each one of you is that each one of you have a black book, or a Rolodex. Go back to the people that you know, go back to them and encourage them to be involved in whatever _____ seizes them. And it doesn't really much matter.

Because the reality is, is that each one of you has a set of priorities, and you need to go after that priority. Because that's where you're going to be involved best.

And the thing I want to also say to everybody is, that as we begin to involved ourselves -- it's like baking bread. You don't need a lot of yeast for a loaf of bread. What I'm suggesting is that not all of your friends are going to be as active and as concerned as you are. But I hope that you can go back and take some of the enthusiasm from this, and tell

them that they should be involved, at least in some way, as you are.

My name is Stephen Price, and I work in Integrity, which is within an Episcopal church. And I want to firstly say that Bishop _____, who has twice been in the parade, went back to convention last year and told them that it was one of the key moments in his ministry, and he's booked for this year. That we came within seven votes of getting a resolution passed on the Blessing of Saint _____ unions, and we're fighting for that this year. But it does happen, and that we have to believe in change.

My family lives, and I'm going to reach them now to Colorado Springs, which you may know. And what, what I followed the process in Colorado very carefully within my family, and within outside things. What I would ask is, especially for the people here with religious values, that we need to go down to a grass roots deep understanding of how we think things really happen.

I went to segregated schools, as a child, and I have seen changes in the south. Not enough, but it seems to be God's laboratory for it can be done. That we go into places like Colorado, and to send like a film of summer, and _____ people's houses, and change their mind.

My name is Michelle McCormack. I'm a clinical psychologist, I'm a follower of Christ, and I understand Christ's message to be that of love. I fell in love with a woman. I'd been involved with the evangelical community, ministering to them for ten years. I came out of my evangelical community, and told them that I loved a woman. These people are my friends, they're my community, they are my family. I no longer have a ministry in the evangelical community, because I fell in love with a woman. I'm off the board that I was on, and I was on some pretty heavy weight boards in that community.

But I still love my friends, and they are trying to love me. We try, very difficult, we're trying to agree to disagree. So my question is to Mel and Nancy, how do we embrace a race, of righteous indignation without it turning to hatred? How do we pursue a transcendent ethic of love, which would be a principle that would combine all of us, all faiths? And that sort of thing. How do we stay with the muck?

I think, first of all, that's a, it's a spiritual discipline. And that means that first of all, you don't lie about being enraged or angry, and you don't call, covering up your feelings, love, and patience, and forbearance, and we

were all taught that. Anybody that was brought up, especially in the Christian church, was taught that anger doesn't belong in the church, first of all. And that's a terrible, horrible, destructive thing. And first of all, to know that rage is a very powerful spiritual emotion and energy. And rage and love are not opposites, they are not opposites. I think, really, love and apathy probably are opposites to some degree, (audience clapping).

My name is Judy, I live in Silver Lake. What I say is sure not going to be popular, but I really feel like the gay and lesbians and their community has not been carrying it's weight in the fight against the far right, has not been visible, and I'd like to say it's about time. Okay, it took Queer Nation to get rid of the fundy off the Santa Monica Blvd. two years ago, okay. Until Act Up, Queer Nation, _____ Hebrew, and other independent queer activists to tell the Christian Coalition at city hall last year. So I really think you guys need to carry more of the weight, and this is the most, this is the biggest crowd I've seen of gay and lesbian religious groups together on this issue.

Also, there is a group that I saw started called Target Hate, it's a collective, and we're part of the state wide network of people that have come out of direction action

groups. It is not a direct action group, to work on issues strictly on the right wing. And I think that if anyone is interested, to contact me or some of my friends back there. The problem, you know, we can get help out of some of the bigger groups, but there is a bureaucracy when you're dealing with the gay and lesbian establishment. Okay, so, I just wanted to let everyone know about that.

Not only do I acknowledge what you said about the religious crowd being too little too late. The transvestites have stood at stone wall, the Queer Nation and Act Up folk who have led the way paid a terrible price. We are way too late, and way too little, and all we can say to you is, thank you for courageously leading the way. We are sorry that we weren't there for you.

The other thing is for me, the answer is, the only solution is coming out. We've got to hear that over and over. The only way people really change, we have to get in a coalition, we have to do all this stuff that you're recommending, and I'd follow you anywhere. But the point is, we have to come out. We have to come out. We have to come out. It changes everything when we come out, (audience clapping).

And having the last word this evening, Ivy _____ for the last comment.

Excuse me Nancy, we have one more. Nancy, don't, oh, I'm sorry, okay, next one.

Don't count the first few things I'm going to say on my time please. Because I want to make these remarks directly to this camera. I want to tell you that you are looking at a lesbian activist. I want to tell you that you are also looking at the mother of two grown children, two daughters, you are looking at the grandmother of a nine year old son, and you are looking at a proud woman, who is so proud to be a member of Nancy Wilson's church, where I go every Sunday, and I get spiritual nurturing. I feel it's a spiritual rally every Sunday in that church. And I challenge you to leave that on the tape, (audience cheering).

Start the clock. I wanted to commend that, something that Micky said. I've been in this community a long time, and watched a lot of organizing. I've been organizing for about 25 years, and I have never seen a solid community now, because we're not organizing. We are following, we are following boards, we are following top heavy organizations, we are following words from the boards telling us what to do.

I'm awful tired of watching Clinton get a bad rap. You know, I was -- (audience clapping) -- I was just as upset when Clinton didn't go along with our plan, when he backed off. But you know, the boards, and the leaders, a handful, hung that man out to dry. We weren't for _____, for what he was asked to do. Some of the religious right had been prepared for years, waiting for something to come down the line. Did anybody know that Clinton would go to say what he said about the ban? Were we prepared? Now we're going to meetings at the Center, to find out how we can change us hanging him out to dry. And we hung him out to dry. Our leaders hung him out to dry. And I'm tired of him getting the bad rap.

I'm sorry he backed out. But this was not the kind of President that we should say, "We're through with you." This is the kind of President that we should say, "You were hung out to dry, we're sorry, we're going to be there from now on." (audience cheering).

You know, I can't resist responding to that one. I think Ivy is right, we cannot hang President Clinton out to dry. But nor should we be apologists for him. We should hold him accountable, is what we should do. And what we should do is, if we can't, and although Micky has been trying to convince me that our fight for civil rights bill is lost,

for the next five or ten years, but I think we should be pushing him, and the Strum Thurmans, and the other people who said, "I'm not against gays, I'm just against gays in the military." Well let's put them to that test. Let's get a gay civil rights bill, let's get Clinton to stand on the line for that. But hold him accountable. Because if we don't hold him accountable for his promises, because he did not stand for what he said he would. That is the bottom line, alright?

Does it mean that he's a bad man? No. Does it mean he won't do some wonderful things for us? I hope not. But if we make an apology for it, and we don't hold him accountable, we will have lost more than just the battle.

What I'd like to do is, give each of us one minute, and then we're going to close. Thanks.

Hi, my name is Tim Jollet. I would just like to echo a little bit what Micky said, where we have many organizations that represent our community, and a lot of times it seems that they each have their own specific agendas. And I think we need to demand, from certain organizations that claim to represent the whole spectrum of our community, accountability and that they do represent equally the whole diversity of our community.

And also, I was in Washington for the March on Washington, and I swear there were no _____ people there. It was the biggest demonstration I've ever been to. And I was disappointed that there were all these arguments about _____ and the media, and official representatives of the figure amount of people that were there. The next march is going to be in June at the UN, and I hope that somehow we can, like make everybody be at a certain place, at a certain time, you know, during that march, or whatever happens, so that they can get a grid figure, and show how many people were really there. Thanks for being here tonight.

And my question is more like, kind of been asked, but I'd actually like to know the how answer to this, is, my name is Lor_____, and am a supervisor for the Speak Up Grass Roots Male Program with the Human Rights Campaign Fund. And a lot of times I'd been out on Santa Monica Blvd, during out reaches, trying to sign up members for the organization. And I'd get a lot of "I'm not political, I don't want to do this," you know, you know, "No, I can't get involved," bla, bla, bla. And I want to know is, how do we get these people involved? I mean, it's great that all of us are here, but I think that all of us are involved in one way or another, but how do we get those that aren't involved involved?

I'd like to respond, respond to that. And that's to remind people, you know, that civil liberation knows not a sit-com, nor does it happen in the course of a half hour with commercials. Now the truth of the matter is, you being out on that corner every Saturday, is a part of the process of getting people involved. And no, it doesn't feel like that, when you're on that street corner every Saturday. And so many people say they're not political. But it's that, it happens in that kind of a way.

Now, as a people that came to this country as slaves, and that process takes generations to overcome. Now, I'm painfully aware of how slow that process can be, and I'm not here to suggest that that is the, that that is the proper way to take that long. But the thing that we need to be mindful, is that you need both the short term, and the long term, and we should not abandon the glut work of the day in and the day out, and the doing it over and over and over again. Because we don't get the immediate self-gratification of seeing that, of seeing the return. So don't abandon those tactics.

Alright, well we just have a few more announcements, and then some follow up, and then we'll close. Ah, first of all Nancy and I would like to announce that this is not the final

collaborative event between our two organizations. We are going to be doing at least one, if not a series of events at the center, on Outing the Bible. Some of the tactics, of learning how to fight back, and talk back to other people can be taught. And so please watch the publicity for those events.

And also, we've got a lot of flyers over here on the table, where you can get some additional information about all kinds of things, including the center and MCC.

We also want to thank all the volunteers who helped put this together, especially the ushers. And Nancy will thank some more.

We're also going to have some folk standing at the back door as you leave, taking a collection. We did incur some expenses in organizing this town hall, whether it was Mel's airline fare, the cost of the sound, even though we've got a cheap deal from the sound company. The water for the panelists, flyers, etc., so to the extent that you can afford to give a donation to help us handle the expenses, that would be great. And now I'm going to turn it over to Nancy, and thanks for coming everyone.

I want to thank three people especially, who worked so hard on the last two months to make this happen. From the

center, Levi Morgan, and from MCC, Skip Tracy, and Rosemary
Issure, will you wave, and give them a hand. Thanks so much.
Thanks so much.

And I want to thank Joel F_____ for Sound Services
Company, for helping us with the video, getting us a deal on
that. All the ushers, and give our panelists once more a
great big hand, thank you so much. And good night.

Nancy, can I make one final announcement. People talked
about things that you can do, AB260, with the

(End of meeting)