

Wright

Gay Life No Progressive Step

By GEORGE F. WILL

WASHINGTON — When first I heard about Richard Adams and his "spouse" Anthony Sullivan, words failed me, and it is probably good they did. Their story, still unfolding, says something about modern sensibilities.

Sullivan, an Australian, came to America in 1973 on a visa permitting him to stay until Jan. 7, 1974. On Jan. 5, 1974, he married a lady in Las Vegas. He promptly petitioned for permanent residence as an



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"alien relative." But by September, 1974, he was living alone, his wife's whereabouts unknown. He was told to demonstrate that his was a *bona fide* marriage. He didn't.

On April 25, 1975, Adams filed a petition on Sullivan's behalf, stating that he, Adams, with the help of a compliant clergyman, had become married to Sullivan in Colorado. The government replied that a same-sex "marriage" is invalid for immigration purposes because it is not real, and certainly Congress never intended a union of that sort to be a basis for a visa petition. So the two fellows went to court to assert their "rights."

THEY SAID the validity of a marriage for immigration purposes should be determined by the law of the place where it occurred, and that Colorado law says:

"A marriage between a man and a woman licensed, solemnized, and registered... is valid in this state."

sex marriages, there is an "inference" of permission. The judge replied that the silence of Colorado's law on same-sex marriages permits no such inference and, besides, congressional intent, easily surmised, should prevail.

The government argued that "the basic structure of society and social values rely upon the historical man-woman marital relationship."

That proposition is precisely what Adams and Sullivan deny. They say the government itself has acted in ways that legitimize doubts about that proposition. They argue that "antiquated notions" about male and female roles are falling away fast. And various judicial and executive decisions cumulatively suggest that soon, if not now, homosexuals will be entitled to all the rights, privileges, and immunities enjoyed under U.S. law.

A court has held that even if one accepts psychiatric testimony that formal recognition by a university of a homosexual student organization would tend to perpetuate or expand homosexual behavior, such evidence does not justify a university's refusal to grant such formal recognition. This is congruent with the policy of the U.S. Job Corps, which has seen fit to issue a manual on "sexuality," enjoining respect for differing sexual "life-styles" and stipulating heterosexual and homosexual activities.

Sullivan and Adams say the "discrimination" against them is unconstitutional because courts no longer allow "stereotyped and/or antiquated assumptions about homosexuality and gender roles."

In a decision affirming the constitutionality of laws prohibiting

supreme court held that marriage "manifestly is more deeply founded than the asserted contemporary concept of marriage and societal interests for which petitioners contend." Adams and Sullivan argue, in effect, that nothing is, or should be, deeply founded in modern society — except, of course, their rights, as they see them.

They say:

"There is no 'important' governmental interest in preserving the moral status quo."

Hence, there is no justification for the "discrimination" that denies them the legal benefits (such as preferential tax treatment) and other advantages (such as "societal respectability") of state-sanctioned marriages. "Times," they admonished the judge (unsuccessfully; now they will admonish a Federal Appeals Court) "are changing, and they are changing very rapidly."

ONE THING DOES indeed lead to another. The fact of change, filtered through the modern mind, becomes charged with value: One thing should lead to another. This mischievous proposition is what C.S. Lewis called "... the fatal serialism of the modern imagination — the image of infinite unilinear progression which so haunts our minds. Because we have to use numbers so much, we tend to think of every process as if it must be like the numeral series, where every step, to all eternity, is the same kind of step as the one before."

But the life of society is not a numeral series. Infinite unilinear progression is a chimera. It is not infinite. It ends, with what Lewis called "the abolition of man."