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## Morphing the Elephant

*Give the kings a pleasant word, as did the other prophets. . . let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak that which is good. (1 Kings 22:13)*

During a recent strategy conference in Seattle, Chris Vance, Chairman of the Washington State Republican Party, warned prospective legislative candidates to stay away from abortion, homosexuality and similar conservative campaign themes if they expect any financial support from the GOP this year. The party goal, says Vance, is to recapture what he calls the “burbs” [suburbs] which until recently, were Republican strongholds. According to focus groups commissioned by the state party, Republicans will need to sound more like Democrats if they hope to wax strong at the polls this fall.

To accomplish a political makeover for the fall campaigns, Vance believes that Republicans will need to incorporate some of the intriguing techniques successfully employed by former President Bill Clinton who claimed he could “feel America’s pain.” One of the tactics the GOP hopes to master is called “triangulation,” a strategy for co-opting an opponent’s most popular issues. In the 1996 presidential election, Bill Clinton successfully convinced voters that he, not Bob Dole, was the family values and balanced budget candidate—campaign idioms quickly discarded after his re-election.

But, insiders know that Chris Vance will need more than lipstick and Fen-Phen to morph his party’s elephant into a donkey. The philosophical differences between Democrats and Republicans are not merely cosmetic. They are cosmic!

The first, if not most significant of the cosmic differences between the two parties, is revealed in the opening statements of their respective party platforms. The preamble of the State Republican Platform declares; “Our Republic was founded as one nation under God on principles that are clearly and simply outlined in the Constitution.” God is mentioned four times in the GOP platform. The Democrat platform, however, makes no reference to God, and begins: “This platform is a declaration of human rights, justice, and opportunity for all.” (Republicans will need to lose the God-thing).

The GOP looks to the individual and the family for the preservation and perpetuation of a strong America. Quoting former President Reagan, their platform says that “. . . America has a mission. We are a nation of freedom, living under God, believing all citizens must have the opportunity to grow, create wealth, and build a better life for those who follow.” Democrats, on the other hand, call for “Innovative solutions and responsible planning . . . to insure our future” - in the international or global community.

The preponderance of contemporary Democrat “think,” is set forth in the first and most substantive plank called *Human Rights & Civil Rights*. It is a lengthy recitation of a new social felicity outlined in the so-called *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. That plank, together with the rest of the platform, vigorously endorses, 29 times, either directly or indirectly, the global objectives of the United Nations.

Among the demands that are non-negotiable for Democrats in our state, are; the guarantees of food, affordable housing, medical care, education, and jobs. Calling for an end to discrimination in all basic human services, Democrats want new classes of protection added to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, including; sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, size, and political affiliation.

Also, in the same first plank, and likewise non-negotiable, is a renewed call for affirmative action (racial quotas), abortion rights, same-sex marriages, separation of church and state and opposition to prayer in schools - positions formerly opposed by Republicans according to their platform, but evidently now on the Chairman's table for reconsideration.

Another fundamental doctrine that Democrats preach in the "burbs," is (in their own words) a "single, universal, publicly-funded, accountable Washington State health care system..." The terms "single" and "universal," means the existence of only one health care plan in our state. Hence, doctors and fellow members of the medical and health care profession would become government workers, employed by the Department of Social and Health Services.

And, many other equally bold but hopefully unattainable objectives - apart from an overthrow of capitalism in America - are outlined in the Democrat plank called "Labor and Economic Justice." Democrats seek sweeping "tax reform that shifts the wealth of this country to working families and their communities." Also demanded, is a "reducing" of the "wage gap between rural and urban areas of the state."

Perhaps the only issues similarly addressed by both political parties, but owned by neither, are that of families and communities. Republicans view the family "as the basic unit of our community [which] must be respected and enhanced." Democrats declare that "Strong communities are the foundation for a safe, stable, and prosperous future for our families." True on both accounts. Yet, neither side addresses the national corruption stemming from the rapidly corroding family.

Democrats see no harm in "Junior" viewing salacious, pornographic images on the Internet at the local library. Nor are they moved when a school counselor drives "Missy" to the abortion clinic without the knowledge or consent of her parents. And, "Dad," dropping a paycheck in the "slots" on the way home from work or risking as much playing video poker on the Internet after dinner—well, that doesn't seem to bother more than a handful in either party - if the games are taxed!

Generations ago, our founders warned of public behaviors that would lead to the overthrow of our nation. One of the founders, Samuel Adams, said; "A general dissolution of principles and manners will more surely overthrow the liberties of America than the whole force of the common enemy." He continued, "Neither the wisest constitution nor the wisest laws will secure the liberty and happiness of a people whose manners are universally corrupt."

Similarly, prophets of old warned the people of Israel that the love of money and the pursuit of unwholesome and ungodly pleasures would most certainly bring calamity upon them. But the people replied, *...Prophesy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits [illusions]. . . cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.*" (Isa 30:10)

Chairman Vance faces the uncomfortable but common tests of those who would lead. The matter to be settled, is will he speak right things or will he speak smooth things? Time will tell.

*Rick Forcier*

Executive Director