

### Terrorist hooks Farrakhan with cash

Sometimes I wish Louis Farrakhan would tone down his rhetoric. But most of the time, I just wish he'd shut up.

Never have I seen a human being spilling over with such hatred for others.

We've all heard Farrakhan's goted trades pronouncing Jews as "devils" and the white man.

But the fiery minister redirected his name-calling to another group of Americans in a recent speech.

In his latest address to the National Association of Black Journalists, Farrakhan showcased another one of the abrasive litanies that has become his trademark.

Over and over again, the leader of the Nation of Islam challenged the 800 journalists to admit they truly accept his anti-Semitic and separatist teachings. The audience remained largely silent.

And over and over again, Farrakhan accused the journalists of failing to print the "truth."

But the climax of the minister's speech was his declaration that the audience of black journalists was nothing more than "house slaves."

Yes, you read correctly. He called an 800-member, black audience "house slaves."

It was low. It was degrading. It was classic Farrakhan.

Such a comment by any other would label him racist.

But Farrakhan's summer wasn't over. So he decided to take a little trip to Libya.

Remember the country alleged to have sponsored the bombing of Pan Am 103?

Well, it seems ol' Louis enjoys spending time with terrorists — he's already made one trip through the Middle East and to Libya earlier this year.

Farrakhan wasn't there for the fun, though.

This time, he was there to receive a \$250,000 "humanitarian award" from none other than our Mediterranean nemesis, the self-proclaimed dictator-colonel, Moammar Gadhafi.

Now it's one thing to have Farrakhan running around the United States in pastel suits giving sermons of hate; it's another thing to see him flashing a smile next to the dictator who has had so many innocent Americans killed.

It's damn near treasonous.

But the award wasn't Farrakhan's only reason for getting bed with Gadhafi.

The colonel had already provided a \$5 million loan to the Nation of Islam before such transactions with Libya were banned. Now, the Libyan leader was baiting Farrakhan with a \$1 billion "gift."

And Farrakhan almost hooked. Fortunately, last Wednesday, the Treasury Department announced Farrakhan would not be allowed to bring either sum of money into the United States.

In response, Farrakhan politely asked Gadhafi to hang on to the cash until a U.S. court heard the matter. Then, he threatened to march on our nation's capital again.

Go ahead and march, Louis. But our government cannot allow Farrakhan or his racist organization to be funded by a terrorist state.

Now I'll be the first to admit our history is not always glorious especially in the chapters devoted to race relations.

But cooperation, not contempt, is the answer, Minister Farrakhan.

Nowhere does the God of Abraham sanction such hatred for our country or your fellow citizens. Not in the Torah. Not in the Bible. And not in the Koran.

This "man of the cloth" continues to preach it, though — always from the safety provided by his intimidators, bow-tied body guards.

And if he gets his way, maybe with the help of a terrorist.

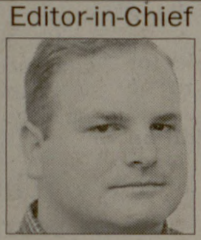
Columnist



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## Liberal ideas don't overshadow identity

Until recently, I was a liberal Republican in search of a support group. Knowing of some of my more liberal ideas, a friend asked me why I called myself a Republican. Before this year's Republican Convention, I wasn't sure how to handle that. But now I realize that it is possible to be a liberal Republican.



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For as long as I can remember, I have known I was a Republican. Gerald Ford, despite a lack of balance, helped heal the nation by granting presidential pardons to Richard Nixon and Vietnam draft dodgers. Jimmy Carter, in his noble efforts to please everyone, pleased no one. And Ronald Reagan pretty much kicked ass all over the globe, making us feel safe and proud.

In high school, I was Alex P. Keaton himself. I still have my "Nixon in '92" pins from the Republican Convention in Houston.

But when George Bush came along, I was old enough that I could actually think about casting a vote, so I paid close attention to the issues and started thinking about where I stood.

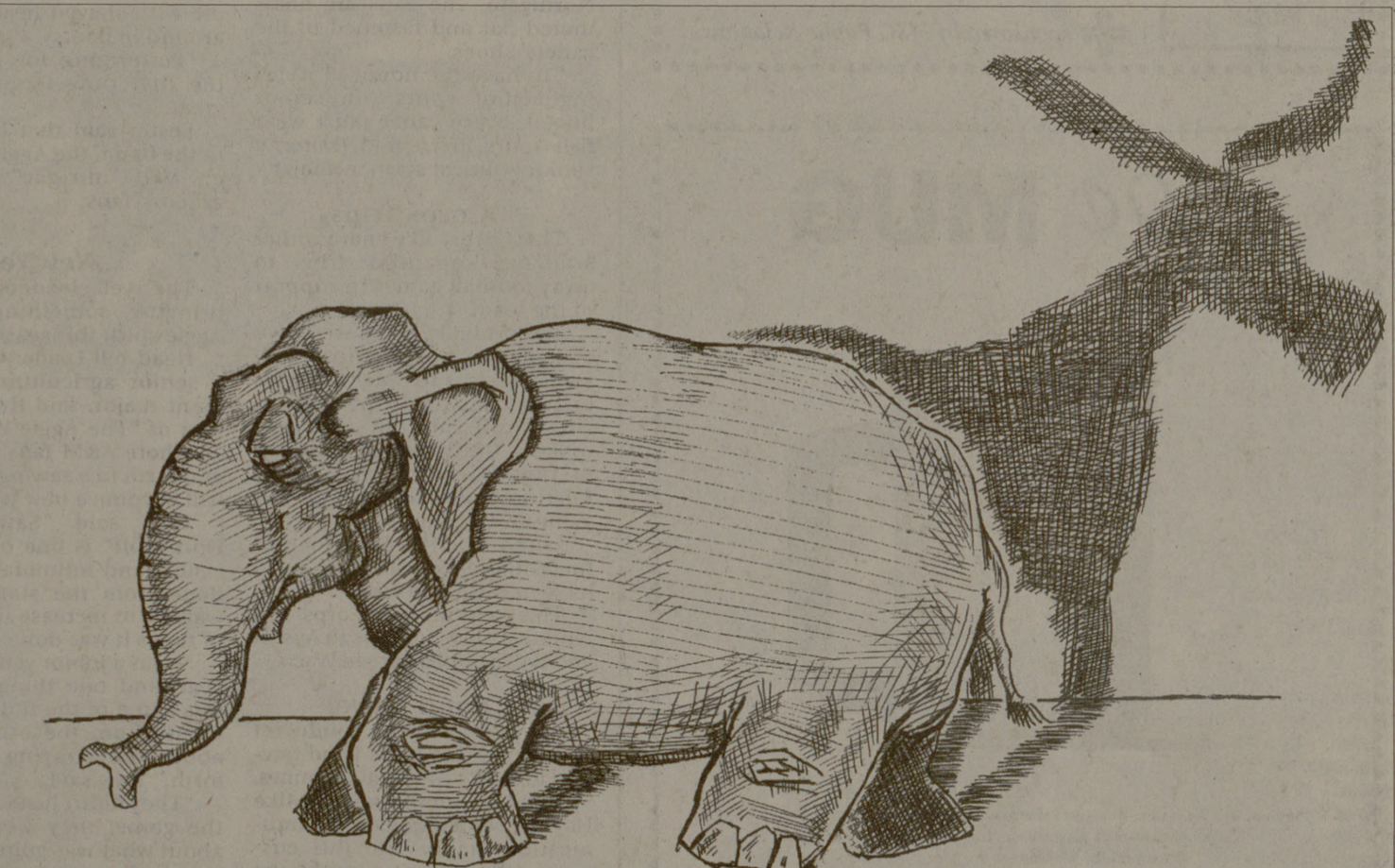
With all the talk about family values (whatever the hell that means) some of my over-zealousness started to wear off.

Now I've altered some of my views. I have become a self-contained collection of paradoxes.

I'm pro-life and pro-choice because there are two issues involved — one moral and one political. I am against the death penalty because I don't think the government has the right to take away anything it has not provided — life.

I'm for affirmative action, but I support the Hopwood decision because it is forcing us to move away from the race issue to the root of the problem — poverty and the lack of opportunity it causes. But I also believe in a multicultural requirement at A&M because too many people pass through this university who never understand the importance of learning about other cultures.

So would I be Pat Buchanan's first choice as a delegate to the platform



committee at the Republican Convention? Probably not.

I concede all future Mail Call arguments right now. I am not consistent with all my ideology. I don't subscribe fully to the beliefs of either side. Few people do.

But the reality is that people vote their pocketbooks. In elections where one candidate promises tax cuts and the other doesn't, the lower-tax guy almost always wins.

Ask Walter Mondale, who promised a tax increase in 1984, what it's like to swim upstream against such a political truth. You might win Minnesota if you're from there.

Right now my pocketbook is telling me that I'm a Republican. Sure, there are tons of issues I have a problem with within the party. Prayer in schools, the anti-abortion movement, anti-immigration sentiment and all that talk about family values does nothing to make me more Republican. But it shouldn't drive

anyone away, either. We should look to the basic philosophy of each party before deciding where we stand.

Republicans have historically believed that smaller government and more private control of the society is the way to go. Democrats believe individuals will not take care of all the nation's problems on their own and they need a large government to help.

Republicans want to spend their own money, and Democrats want the government to pool our money and channel it into worthwhile causes that meet our most pressing needs.

Neither side is right, and neither side is wrong. And our government was designed so that neither side could make too much progress without the pendulum swinging in the other party's direction.

But right now government is too big and unresponsive. As a journalist, I'm

about to join a job market where I'll make diddley-squat, and the government will take the squat. That squat will go to support some program (or at least the people employed by that program). Then Republicans will talk about cutting the amount that program gets.

Democrats will say we need that program, media will do stories about what will happen if that program is cut, and the program will continue to make its contribution to the national debt.

We want a smaller government, but damn you if you cut the funding to a program in my town.

So when President Clinton talks about building a bridge to the future, I don't look for a program he's offering to make me come aboard — I look at how high the toll is, and I opt to stay with the Republican Party for this go-around. Even if it means I continually have to convince people it is possible to be a liberal Republican.

### Consumers face difficulties buying with their consciences

When it comes to the corporate world, ignorance really is bliss.

As consumers, we can make a statement with where we choose to spend our money. Back in high school economics class, we called it "purchasing power."

But in our fast-paced life, it's not so much a power as it is a robotic act of commerce, something we do all the time without thinking.

This makes it a lot harder nowadays to be a conscientious consumer. Being a conscientious consumer simply means that you think seriously about the company you're giving your money to, and you don't buy a company's products if you object to any of its practices — moral, environmental or commercial.

The trouble is, it's hard to know what you're buying. Companies can be connected in lots of strange ways that you will probably never know about.

Recently I decided to buy a nice fountain pen. I bought one once from Wal-Mart and it tended to leak all over my hands and my clothes and just make a big inky mess. It was terrible.

But I still liked it. I just wanted my new one to be higher-quality.

A few weeks before, I had gotten this catalog in the mail, and there was a Parker pen in it that I liked a lot. But it was too expensive. So I searched the Internet to see if I could find any cheaper pens by the same company.

Among the places I found "Parker," there was a suspicious little entry — the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals' (PETA) web site. I was curious, so I took a look and found out two things I didn't know.

First, Parker is owned by Gillette, the folks who make



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shaving cream and razors and other such hygiene tools for millions of people, including me.

Second, Gillette is on PETA's list for the extensive animal testing it carries out. That came completely out of the blue. And it presented me with a dilemma — two, actually. Did I still want to buy a Parker pen after what I had just found out? And did I want to give up shaving?

I've given up on the Parker pen; they're all too expensive for me. But I still have to shave (once a week).

This was when I adopted the "ignorance is bliss" idea — I decided there was nothing I

to stand up for the workers often get thrown in jail.

It's sobering and frustrating because we, the consumers, are the ones paying for it by buying the products produced there.

The situation is similar with the cheap Mexican labor made available to American companies by NAFTA. The trade agreement brings a big boost to economic development, but it also makes it easier for rich American companies to exploit cheap labor just south of the border.

I guess that's why it brings such a big boost to economic development.

Finally, many people make their purchasing decisions based on price. If a product made by children in China is cheap, it'll sell regardless of where or how it was made.

All these factors — animal testing, exploitation, cheap prices — are unavoidable facets of the emerging global economy, the mammoth size and power of many corporations, and the extreme poverty of half the world.

Plus, it's almost impossible to find out the truth about a particular company.

If I wrote to Gillette and asked them about their animal testing, they probably wouldn't tell me a doggone thing. And if I kindly asked them to stop it, they probably wouldn't.

It's just odd that we're so suspicious of what the government does with our tax dollars while we ignore what businesses do with the money we give them.

And about the pen? I've decided to spring for a \$5.99 one at Wal-Mart. Hey, it's cheap. But at least it's made in America. Wal-Mart never does anything bad — it's a good clean patriotic company with blue-collar commercials and a catchy tune. The pay is worse. Child labor is rampant. Crusaders for workers' rights are few, and those that try

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### Editorial Roundup

(AP)—Here are excerpts from editorials in newspapers in the United States and abroad.

The Augusta (Ga.) Chronicle on Ross Perot:

Ross Perot, that jug-eared hawker of homespun hokum, isn't reaching into his own deep pockets this time around as he makes another pointless run for the presidency.

Instead, Perot is digging into your pockets for campaign cash, accepting \$29 million in federal matching funds.

Running in 1992, the Texan carped that the Democrat and Republican candidates were "spending your money, taxpayer money" on their campaigns. That was supposed to answer the charge that the little dictator was trying to buy the presidency with his multi-billion-dollar fortune.

Perot has had a change of heart about spending taxpayers' money, or perhaps he's just a savvy investor who knows a bad deal when he sees it. Either way, Libertarian presidential candidate Harry Browne, who is refusing federal funds for his campaign, skewers Perot as a "political welfare queen."

Star Tribune, Minneapolis, on welfare reform:

Now that President Clinton has signed a landmark bill requiring welfare recipients to find work, it's worth posing a little-asked question: are there really enough jobs out there to accomplish the task? ...

At the signing ceremony, Clinton admitted that the welfare bill is imperfect and allowed that "we can fix what is wrong." Among the many things wrong with this bill is that it furnishes far too little money to employ welfare recipients who cannot find private jobs and far too small a safety net for those who find no work at all. Clinton and the Congress that sent him this bill owe the nation, and its needy, no less than a readiness to fix its flaws when the realities of the job market begin to take hold.

Valley Daily News, Kent, Wash., on presidential campaigning:

Voters who think the country has entered the phase of publicly financed elections have only to look at two recent events to disabuse themselves of that notion.

On Aug. 17, President Clinton turned 50 with a star-studded party that is expected to net Democrats \$10 million.

A few days before that, Republicans who chair various committees had lobbyists and major corporations lining up in San Diego to host fancy receptions in their honor.

In both cases, the public can legitimately ask, whose country is this, anyway? ...

We know campaigning is expensive and we're not suggesting individuals or corporations be denied the right to support the candidate of their choice.

No right is more basic to our democracy than freedom of speech. But appearances still count.

The continual wining and dining of our elected officials can't help but leave a bad taste in the public's mouth.

Asland (Ore.) Daily Tidings on the minimum wage:

You can call it election-year poll-watching, but kudos still should go to Republicans and Democrats in Congress who voted to buck a federal minimum wage that is near a 40-year low after adjusting for inflation.

Looking a little closer at the figures, however, it's clear the raise in minimum wage is, well, minimal. ...

Next year, when employers will be required to pay \$5.15 per hour, a worker still will be taking home just \$670 a month, or about \$8,000 a year — if he or she works full time. Many employers hire several part-time employees to avoid paying health or other benefits.

... our national reasoning hasn't caught up with the country's social and economic transitions.