

## Two separate worlds

Bishops should not use religious status to influence abortion politics

Recently, nearly 300 bishops unanimously approved a position statement that calls for a constitutional amendment banning abortion."



MELISSA BEDSOLE

Although Cathleen Cleaver, the new head of the bishop's anti-abortion secretariat, acknowledged that "the chances of a constitutional amendment were remote," it is their influences that will matter here.

Their opinions on the issue of abortion could influence many lawmakers.

While this is an important issue, it does not need to be about changing any laws.

The Constitution, as well as its amendments, defines rules that pertain to all people in this country.

Many Christians are quick to point out that abortion goes against beliefs regarding murder, but life is not the only Christian value that is involved here.

This issue involves honesty. Those fighting abortions likely have not been in a situation where they had to deal with having a child created by rape.

How can these people truly say they know what they would choose to do if they were in that situation? It is probable that neither the bishops nor their supporters can say with certainty what they would do.

But honesty is most important in realizing that this procedure is never going to be ended.

For some people, it is merely the choice of a doctor's office or illegal "back alley" clinic.

One is clean and safe, and the other is not — Americans should not make the "back alley" the only choice for someone.

This issue involves having to understand the decision of others and respecting that the choices people make about their bodies are not something that laws can

**These bishops are using status as a political machine to influence a change to the Constitution, the very thing that defines their religion as something separate from laws in this country.**

be made for.

Abortion involves one person and her body and it is wrong for the bishops to support mundane laws to govern such a personal issue.

There are no laws on eating disorders, but they are killing people. Millions of Americans are ruining their bodies, but no one — including the bishops — is urging regulation against it.

A possible reason is because, technically, their bodies belong to them and what they choose for themselves is their right.

Like it or not, unborn babies are a part of a woman's bodies.

They are not independent — without the mother's body, the baby would die.

There are no laws against women who smoke, drink or malnourish their bodies while they are pregnant.

It would have been fitting if the bishops had kept this in mind when they drafting their position statement.

Mothers are causing life-threatening problems for their children, but no one is stopping them.

Their decision is not anyone else's decision, and abortion should not be, either.

Granted, the idea of using abortion as a form of birth control method should be ended.

But there are emergencies, and there needs to be a safe way to deal with them.

Abortion is not the right choice for everyone, but it should remain a choice.

Abortion is an issue in America — religion is an issue in America.

Other than that, the two should not be related in opinion forming and law-making.

Melissa Bedsole is a junior psychology major.



RUBEN DELUNA/THE BATTALION

### GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT...



### Mail Call

#### Sense of Christmas lost in column

In response to Nicholas Roznovsky's Nov. 28 column.

After reading Roznovsky's opinion column, I was appalled. There were so many things wrong with what was being said.

Instantly, my blood boiled and my anger rose. I agree that in many ways, businesses begin the annual holiday shopping frenzy early. Every year it seems to start sooner than the year before.

But for many, it is not an annoyance. Those of us who do celebrate the winter holidays enjoy it. It is the one time of the year when we all rush to the department stores to buy presents and search for the perfect Christmas tree.

But it is also the one time of year when everyone is friendly to one another and giving.

Despite the presents and lights, it reminds us that it is not the gifts we get or who has the best-decorated house, but that it

is our friends and family that matter.

Christmas does not carry with it limitations.

Yes, Christians observe advent only four weeks out of the year, but we celebrate the reason for the season the whole year round.

Our joy of being alive and our happiness of knowing that we are saved because of Christ's birth and death prevails and stays in our hearts and minds for eternity.

It is too big to be contained in four weeks. A celebration of eternal life does not work that way. There is no moderation for the joy of salvation.

As Christians, how can we not be excited about Christmas every day? It should not be an annual event. It should be a continuous lifetime celebration that lives in our hearts and spills over into our everyday lives.

That is the sanctity of Christmas that we need to preserve.

Tracey Petway  
Class of '01

## No hard feelings Bush should appoint Democrats to Cabinet

Assuming the electoral situation in Florida remains as it is now, Gov. George W. Bush will have his hands full as the 43rd president of the United States.



MARK PASSWATERS

He will be the third president in history to be inaugurated after losing the popular vote, and he will have won with a single electoral vote to spare.

As a result, Bush cannot come in and play hardball with the Democrats immediately.

Such a move would destroy his chances of accomplishing anything of substance.

There are a number of ways, however, that Bush could come to an accommodation with the opposing party.

Doing so would not only help him in the eyes of the public, but make it easier for him to gain support for his agenda.

In many countries, this situation would be settled by having the leader appoint a coalition government, placing members of smaller parties in the Cabinet to ensure their support.

Such a scenario would never work in this country, and the Democrats in Washington appear to be in no mood to negotiate.

It would, however, be politically prudent for Bush to appoint a Democrat or two to his Cabinet for a number of reasons.

It would be a good public relations move, and would buttress Bush's claim that he is a uniter and him chances in obtaining the support of more moderate Democrats for his agenda.

Although the majority of Americans believe Bush won the presidency fairly and would accept him as chief executive, that does not mean that they endorsed his plans for the country.

Even though his loss in the popular vote was by less than one-half of 1 percent, more than 300,000 more people supported Al Gore than Bush.

Bush mentioned that he was "a uniter, not a divider" during the campaign.

If he finally does become president, his record in Texas will go out the window with the Clintons' laundry.

He must now prove himself on the national stage. Appointing De-

mocrats to the Cabinet could not hurt.

That being said, these Democrats would have to be pragmatic, not interested in furthering their own political career and willing to work with a member of the opposing party for the country's benefit.

One possibility is Sam Nunn, the former senator from Georgia.

and his reputation has suffered as a result.

Nunn is known for his principles and appears to have no further political ambitions. This would make him a perfect fit.

Bush would be wise to find another Democrat, probably from the South, who leans to the conservative side.

Once again, it would have to be

Passage of some sort of legislation on these issues, no matter how watered-down, would give the public the impression that Bush can indeed work across party lines.

Once Bush has successfully gained the trust and support of the public, he can then move forward on issues that made him popular with the Republican base.

In other words, tax cuts. He must be cautious not to appear like this is No. 1 on his wish list, or he will be condemned to at least two years (and probably four) of gridlock.

Once he has addressed issues where there is bipartisan support, he can be more daring.

Bush's job as the next president will not be as difficult as a blind man's in a minefield, but it will be tough.

To make things easier on himself, he needs to at least make the appearance of being willing to deal with the Democrats.

Appointing a couple of them to his Cabinet and working with them on selected issues could do the trick.

Once he has killed them with kindness, he can then try simply killing them (in a legislative sense, of course.)

Mark Passwaters is a senior electrical engineering major.

**It would, however, be politically prudent for Bush to appoint a Democrat or two to his Cabinet for a number of reasons.**

Nunn is being considered for the position of secretary of defense.

If Bush could convince Nunn to serve, in spite of his statements that he has no interest in the job, it would be an even larger coup for Bush.

Though he has been scorned for voting against the 1991 Persian Gulf War, Nunn was the head of the Senate Armed Service Committee and has an extensive background in military affairs.

It is almost certain that he would do a better job than William Cohen, the Republican secretary of defense under President Clinton.

Cohen has been unwilling to make a stand for the best interests of those in uniform for four years,

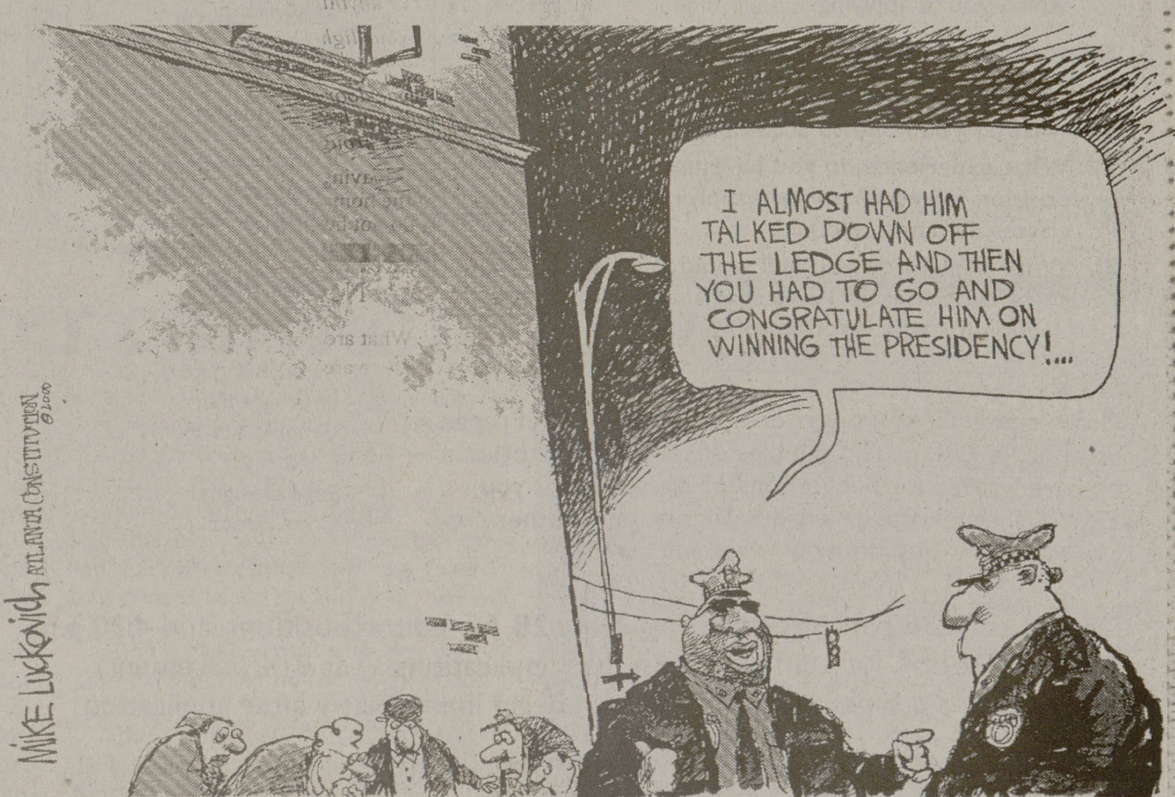
someone who has had his time in the limelight and is now interested in just helping his country.

It may be difficult for Bush to find a conservative Southern Democrat. Most people who once fit that description are now called Republicans.

In any case, he and Dick Cheney should have their eyes and ears open for a possible fit.

Once Bush has found his token Democrats, he must be careful not to push too hard on some of his issues too quickly.

Social Security and Medicare are the "now" topics, and it is possible that Bush could find some support for his agendas on those issues from a few Democrats in the House and Senate.



MIKE LUCKOVICH

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