

Lesbians," *Sexually Transmitted Diseases* 8 (supp): 330, 1981; 3) Wilcox, R.R.: "Sexual Behavior and Sexually Transmitted Disease Patterns in Male Homosexuals," *British Jour-*

*nal of Venereal Diseases* 57: 167, 1981; 4) Harry, J., de Vall, W.B.: *The Social Organization of Gay Males* (New York: Praeger, 1978). Now if Mr. Barry wants to see a real example of

"shrillness" and "bigotry" he should read the letter from Mr. Edwards in this issue and perhaps re-read his own (by the way, one of the aims of the framers of the Constitution was

to promote the general welfare). To Mr. Edwards I can only extend pity that he chooses to put his name to the nonsense he has written. For  
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## THE CONTINUING CRISIS



•September has vanished, and wherever the Hon. Mondale campaigns these thankless days he declaims: "I'm not trying to get elected President by hiding from the American people." Perhaps the time has come for hiding. If the polls tell us anything it is that the more he campaigns the lower he slumps in the esteem of the electorate. Possibly he should return to North Oaks, Minnesota and conduct the kind of front porch campaign that served the great Harding so well and McKinley before that. If this strategy proves ineffectual, let him try the back porch; and let him bring his friend Mr. Andrei Gromyko with him. So desperate had Mr. Mondale become by the end of September that a photo session with the Soviet foreign minister seemed helpful, and it tells us something about the prudence of Mr. Mondale's foreign policy that the Soviet diplomat was eager to assist him.

•The senescence of Graham Greene continues to be exploited by unscrupulous journalists. This month his gaga corpse was quoted in London's *Sunday Observer* as having said that Ronald Reagan is "a menace . . . as extreme as anyone in the Kremlin" and that Americans are "noisy and incredibly ignorant of the world." Well, perhaps he did, but he probably also said that he had quite forgotten who put his shoes on the morning of the interview and that his trousers were once again inexplicably sopping wet. Imagine, describing the average American as "noisy." Has the old boy forgotten tea time at Brown's Hotel with all the mule-faced English ladies yakking idiotically as they wolf down the low-grade victuals that on that esurient isle pass for delicacies? Mr. Greene's only justification for describing the American as noisy is that by comparison the British male is quite restrained, usually owing to the fact that he is so unaccustomed to speaking in mixed company and that, be he like Mr. Green a disciple

of leftist flumdidle, he now has no one left to listen to him. The helio-maniacs of the state of Washington are triumphant after having the National Park service install a \$30,000 solar-powered comfort station atop Mount Rainier. The expensive contraption is the epitome of New Age Liberal idealism, its advocates even having rejected the Reaganites' plans for fitting it with pay toilets in fulfillment of their pay-as-you-go philosophy. In Oklahoma City Mr. David Johns Bryson, a convicted rapist who was arrested after Dr. Jon Tillinghast notified police that he had treated the man for a severe bite on the genitals, is suing the doctor for \$2.5 million in damages, claiming that Dr. Tillinghast's unauthorized report led to his unfortunate juggling.

•Sports fans throughout the West were disappointed when Iran again delayed its long-awaited offensive against Iraq, both powers settling instead for the more conventional Islamic tactic of ambushing civilian tankers in the Persian Gulf. In London an Iranian diplomat discomfited residents of an unusually quiet neighborhood by slaughtering a sheep in a curbside ritual in front of his domicile, and now there is evidence that the Ayatollah's holy disciples may have infiltrated the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. Two members of the Department sent to a Baton Rouge shopping center to free three baby raccoons from a trash dumpster clubbed them to death much to the astonishment of shoppers, dozens of whom had gathered 'round the dumpster with their expectant tots all hoping to see the cute little arboreal Carnivora gambol off into the nearby wilderness. But no, *thwack, thwack*, and these professionally trained conservationists had created coonburger.

•More lascivious pictures of the former Miss America, Vanessa Williams, have appeared in *Penthouse* magazine, and now come reports that somehow the foul Mr. Guccione has

procured shots of Miss Williams scantily clad in leather and chains for his January issue. Nonetheless the plucky beauty vows to clear her name, having declared in the September 10 issue of *People*, "... I am not a slut, and somehow I am going to make people believe me." Perhaps she could realize her goal by claiming that she is an intellectual, inattentive to matters of dress, and more absorbed with philosophical inquiries into questions of the sublime and the beautiful or of supply-side economics. Former President Jimmy Carter turned up in Harlem, hammer in hand, to rebuild a derelict tenement dwelling and to give personal testimony to some weird facet of his New Age Christian esotery. It was goofball Carter at his best, dressed like a garbage man, smiling like a lunatic, promising to take his tool box next to Nicaragua where "We've got a lot of friends. . . . We want the folks down there to know that some American Christians love them and that we don't all hate them." That piece of impertinence notwithstanding, late in the month Jimmy went into a dreadful snit when he perceived the President's remarks on the September 20 bombing of our Beirut Embassy as a criticism of the Carter Administration's stewardship of the Central Intelligence Agency. So fevered did he become that the President rushed to placate him with a telephone call. Yet did Mr. Carter ever apologize for his Nicaraguan yawp or for criticizing a sitting American President during Mr. Carter's trip to Japan? Hem, hem.

•In a follow-up on one of the most memorable stories ever to appear in this column, Miss Linda Jean Loftin, the lesbian who fathered a child (Sparkle Christel) by artificially inseminating her lover (Miss Mary Elizabeth Flournoy) with a turkey baster fortified with semen from her brother (Opel Ronald), has been granted visitation privileges. The couple broke up in 1980, probably owing

to the continual publicity that followed their simple proclamation of love on "The Phil Donahue Show" with Phil earnestly presiding. Though Miss Loftin had paid child support over the years, young Sparkle Christel's mother would not allow visitation privileges, fearing as she did for Sparkle's moral life. Now things have changed, and thanks to the Solomonic wisdom of Alameda County Superior Court Judge Demetrius P. Agretalis, the Republic's first turkey-baster-conceived love child will have a proper male role model.

•Peace groups derived surprisingly little comfort from the Navy's admission that between a quarter and a third of its Sidewinder and Sparrow missiles are unserviceable. Mr. William Rider became the first husband in U.S. history to be convicted of raping his wife, despite the fact that feminists have argued passionately that every child in the land is the offspring of a rapist. And Washington's virtue patrols led by the upright Senator Howard Metzenbaum, a parking lot millionaire, may be turning their scrutiny on Mr. Jacob A. Stein. Mr. Stein, whose Adlai Stevenson bow ties had for years placed him above suspicion in the Washington community, is the independent counsel who issued a 385-page report last month vindicating White House counsel Edwin Meese of all charges and rumors against him, including the cuff-link caper.

•Finally, not only did Mr. Truman Capote have the bad grace to die while being a house guest at the home of Johnny Carson's ex-wife, but in his will the cad established an annual award for literary criticism. The prize is to be called "The Truman Capote Award for Literary Criticism in Memory of Newton Arvin," and apparently Mr. Arvin, a critic and author, will have to live with this infamy for the rest of his life. Truman, you rascal!

—RET

# EDITORIALS



## WINDY MORALIZERS

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

Last month, when the Democrats' great hope addressed the issue of religion in politics and bragged that the United States is "the most religious nation on earth," I hope none of the venerable mullahs in faraway Iran got wind of it. They can be very touchy; and with gongs going off all over, calling every wretch in their theocracy to his prayer rug, these holy men can make a very good case that theirs is the most religious nation of all. For that matter, throughout the Islamic crescent and in such exotic parts as black Africa and the Indian subcontinent, there are thousands of mullahs, swamis, and other such notables presiding over lands full of piety and numinous things. To be sure, many Americans are very religious, but is this really "the most religious nation"? Come, come.

One expects hypocrisy and cant on the campaign trail, but on this question of religion in politics there has

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been nothing else. Here is a debate in which hardly an accurate statement has been heard, including the President's August 23 claim that "morality's foundation is religion." That would be news to Plato. As for today, religion may be the moral foundation for many but not for those honorable atheists and agnostics for whom religion, as commonly defined, has no usefulness whatsoever.

Of all the debates fevering this political campaign not even the fairness debate is more awash in balderdash. The pols are to be congratulated. They have taken a serious matter and rendered it almost wholly nonsensical.

Walter objects to Ron's bringing religion into politics, though it is not clear to me that Ron committed any such infamy. Walter never complained when his old boss, Jimmy Carter, addressed this same Christian crowd. Nor did Walter object when the Catholic bishops, claiming to answer religion's call, got into the disarmament debate. Of course they entered on Walter's side.

Of those of us who were on the other side and who wore no clerical collar it was a no-win debate. Appeasers among the clergy exploited the prestige of their holy orders strenuously, and when a poor columnist such as myself questioned their judgment and knowledge of national security matters he was given the bum's rush. Suddenly I was accused of being anti-Catholic and of denying the reverend clergy their First Amendment rights. Meanwhile, bishops and priests ably abetted by ministers and rabbis hummed along, insisting on the superiority of their insights into the arms race, a superiority denied those of us not versed in theological matters and moral conundrums.

Walter spoke admiringly last month of "the wall our founders placed between government and religion," yet for two decades it has rarely been the religious who have encroached on that wall. Rather it has been the political zealots, particularly those who are happy to call themselves progressives. It is they who have gone into areas of settled morality and slammed down their innovations with no consideration for the sincerely held religious scruples of millions of traditional Christians and Jews, not to mention non-religious types

who liked things as they were.

Not only have these so-called progressives disregarded the scruples of others, but on private matters such as abortion and sex education they have also insisted that those in opposition pick up some of the bills. This is insensitivity to the point of intolerance. For those who were forced to watch their laws being turned against them, usually through decidedly undemocratic methods, surely some accommodations could have been made, say, by allowing mandatory waiting periods for abortion and by having sex education segregated from curriculums and made optional.

Returning to my earlier point, I doubt Ronald Reagan has committed the infamy Walter suggests. In 1976 Jimmy Carter introduced evangelical Christians to politics after noting their growing concern over the progressives' encroachments on their values. It is very amusing to see Walter inflamed over political moralizers. He is one of the windiest moralizers of all. The plight of the throwaway bottle is a moral matter to him as was energy policy during the Carter Administration. Now Walter tells us he is worried about the government's "looking over your shoulder." Under his old boss it was adjusting your thermostat. In faraway Iran you will find the moralizers more consistent. □

## WITH THE FIRST BARTENDER

Dear Mr. President:  
Drinks at 4:45 at your place? Just you, me, and a few of the colleagues from the Washington press corps? It will not be easy. I am expected at dinner in New York at 9:00, and you know how often planes are delayed along that flight route, what with all the lobbyists, lawyers, and other such modern-day prestidigitators flying to and from the site of the U.S. Treasury. Nonetheless, I shall be there. Next to barbers, bartenders are my favorite public servants, and as a taxpayer I have a keen interest in the artistry of

the White House bartender, or, as we in the press might say, the First Bartender.

You must be aware that my acceptance is very "controversial." Many of the colleagues worry that you and even your Democratic opponent are denying the press access, frequent "off-the-record" soirées being only one of your stratagems. They believe that off-the-record meetings limit our opportunities to report "the news." They fear that by schmoozing with us in this way you endanger our virtue to the point that we may be enchanted into becoming

