

CRAWFORD  
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COMPANY



Executive Offices ■ P.O. Box 3003 ■ Blue Bell, PA 19422-0735 ■ (215) 628-3500

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Donald B. Crawford, President

## THE STAND HATE

"I hate George Bush!"

So said a friend of mine who happens to be a Democrat and Liberal, or to use his terminology, an extreme Liberal, whatever that means. There are millions upon millions of Americans, he said, who HATE George Bush. He never really told me why, but he assured me the hatred was real nonetheless.

I had often heard in the eight years of 1993 through 2001, some extreme Conservatives and Republicans say:

"I HATE BILL CLINTON!"

I never found out from any why Bill Clinton was hated so much, but I was assured the hatred was real.

That, I think, in a nutshell, is what is wrong with American politics. There really can be no justification for any rational human being to hate George Bush any more than there can be any good reason why anyone should hate Bill Clinton. None whatsoever. Each is mere mortal, like you and me. Disagree with the man, of course. Work by voting, dialogue, proselytizing against his issues, beliefs, legislation, foreign policy, political philosophy, values (or the lack thereof), of course. Let the world know if you must that you disagree. But hate is for men and women of violence and terror. Hate of individuals destroys everything, including and especially those who hate.

There can be no dialogue, no sane and rational discussion of political or any other kind of issues by a Republican with a Democrat who hates George Bush. None whatsoever. There can be no constructive dialogue of any kind by a Democrat with a Conservative Republican who hates Bill Clinton. None whatsoever. And, that is why there is virtually no rational political discourse in America today. People would rather hate the enemy and make any attempt for rapprochement. They would act or react on ignorance, rather than making any attempt to learn or know. Those who hate are always prone to anger which destroys dialogue. Discourse is not a matter of searching for truth, but rather argumentation, winning, being right while everyone and everything else is wrong. It is as though republicans and Democrats, Conservatives and Liberals, are divided by an impenetrable wall and ne're the twain shall meet, especially in civil dialogue.

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So, Bush is wrong. Iraq is wrong. No Federal funding for stem cell research is wrong. And the list goes on, and on, and on. Our opinion, says one camp, is right, and the other is wrong. And of course that other camp says that the one camp is wrong and so the matter ends. If one hates George Bush, than one can just as easily hate an ordinary citizen who is pro-life as Bush is. If one hates Bill Clinton, than one can hate an ordinary citizen who is pro-choice like Bill Clinton is. Hard indeed it is to stop the hate once it gets going. Anyone who disagrees becomes the enemy. Any position taken not our own, is wrong, plain and simple and there the matter ends. No dialogue, no discussion, no civility, no respect, no understanding. We are so caught up in extreme areas of disagreement that we never have the opportunity to search for those areas where we may be in agreement.

Take abortion. I have never heard or been involved in a rational, sane, calm, deliberate discussion of this inflammatory issue, have you? If there is ever any issue which is a matter of right or wrong only, it is abortion. Once, in discussions, a woman pro-choice and aggressively so, told me that she was against partial birth abortion. That admission allowed discussion and debate. Another time, a woman asked me if my wife, sister, daughter or close friend were raped or the victim of incest and pregnant, would I condone abortion or encourage that innocent victim to seek one. It is one thing, said she, to discuss an issue like abortion theoretically, and quite another to do what is right when a loved one is raped or the victim of incest, quite another indeed. I thought long and hard, and real discussion and debate began. The debate was good and healthy. Neither she pro-choice, or I pro-life changed our points of view or ultimate convictions. But we left the discussions with new insight into the issues and far greater respect for rational debate and even more importantly, each other. Understanding and civility replaced hatred.

Politicians continue with the constant personal attacks ad hominem. A Democrat proclaims George Bush dead wrong, the war in Iraq dead wrong, failure to Federally fund stem cell research dead wrong. But that very same politician never bothers to tell us what is right, but what he or she will do if and when elected. Bush on the other hand tells us that the war in Iraq is right, that all who think we should just get out are wrong, that not funding stem cell research at the Federal level is right and all other opposing points of view are wrong but he never really tells us why the war is right, not clearly but only in politically correct terms, and why Federal funding of stem cell research is wrong. Not really. It is just too easy to make the moral judgment, to claim the high ground and essentially attack the people and their judgments who disagree. No wonder America is so polarized. Polarization leads to complete misunderstanding, disrespect, mistrust and ultimately HATRED of the other, the enemy. Hate destroys everything, including and especially the haters.

Most people argue and will not debate. Most people think (know) they are right and will not really tolerate opposing points of view. Most people do not wish discourse or dialogue, and most people are not open or willing to consider any other point of view. It is far easier to condemn and ostracize the other. How easy it is to forget that this other person, whatever the values or belief system, is a human being god-made. Our

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approach, as our Christian faith and in fact virtually all other faiths require, is to love that other person, even if he or she is enemy, even if he or she hates us. Almost impossible to do, is it not?

I disliked Bill Clinton's lifestyle, and disagreed with much of his political philosophy. But I did not and never would hate the man. In fact, as a human being, in some ways, he was likeable. His personality was jovial, casual, friendly and often warm, even if some of that was political or hypocritical. I never knew him so how in the world could I hate him. Almost everyone who hates George Bush never met him. Funny it is in life how a handshake and a hug can melt away misunderstanding, dislike and even hatred itself. Perhaps we should require politicians to hug each other before they would be allowed to verbally attack each other. That might be good in deed for America and all us average citizens who bear the brunt of this political hatred. Listen for it at work in this great election time. Hear the words of anger and hatred and perhaps it might be a good thing to not vote for that person. Perhaps it should be a criteria for any politician that he or she is disqualified for office if they attack another human being and not the issues. Perhaps politicians should be allowed to only attack the issues, and not people. If that were so, some politicians would not know what to say.

America deserves men and women of good will in office, regardless of their political beliefs. We need as former President Bush said, a kinder, gentler political structure, civil, courteous and respectful, role models at work and not the hate mongers so many of which are well ensconced on Capital Hill. This world of ours is in desperate need of right thinking people. And so, I close with my own moral judgment:

HE OR SHE WHO HATES IS WRONG!

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