

# *The K.F. Stone Weekly*

(Formerly "Beating the Bushes")



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## IT'S STILL IRONIC

Lately, in what passes for my "free time," I've been reediting the first decade's worth of *K.F. Stone Weekly* essays, the first of which -- *As Dad Used to Say* -- posted on February 4, 2005. It is my intention to publish these pieces in a collection tentatively entitled *500 Mondays*. These essays represent far more than a decade's worth of opinions; they are, in my estimation, a chronicle of the events

and people, the issues and campaigns of a crucial period in world history.



Yesterday, I spent about an hour reediting the five essays I wrote back in April 2010. They dealt with the Exodus From Egypt, Charlie Crist, Ed Koch, the difference between Liberals and Conservatives and one on former Arkansas

Governor Mike Huckabee entitled [\*Irony, Isn't It?\*](#)

This essay dealt with Huckabee's then-recent interview with the College of New Jersey student paper, *The Perspective*, in which he held forth on the subject of homosexuality and same-sex marriage. In my essay, I quoted Huckabee, who told the student journalists that the effort to allow gays and lesbians to marry is "*comparable to legalizing incest, polygamy and drug use.*" Furthermore, Huckabee -- who at the time was seriously contemplating running for the 2012 Republican presidential nomination -- said that gay couples should not be permitted to adopt because "*Children are not puppies.*" The "irony" mentioned in the essay's

title was that just 24 hours after Governor Huckabee informed *The Perspective's* student editors that gays and lesbians were in violation of Biblical law, President Obama issued an Executive Order mandating most of the nation's hospitals to grant the same visitation rights to gay and lesbian partners that they do to heterosexual couples. The "irony," I noted at the end of the piece, "is that the president is about to be trashed for *expanding* liberty."

Taking a 5-minute break from editing this now 5-year old piece, I went online to check out what was going on in the world of politics in the hopes of finding a topic for *this week's* essay which, by the way is #536. And -- irony of ironies -- what should I find almost immediately, but a story about Mike Huckabee -- who is now seriously considering running for the 2016 Republican presidential nomination -- holding forth on . . . you guessed it, the issue of gays and gay marriage. Ah, remembrance of things past! This time around, Huckabee, when asked by CNN's Dana Bash if he thought being gay is a choice, [deflected the question](#), but then proceeded to compare that "lifestyle" to drinking alcohol, using profanity, and enjoying classical music or ballet.

After engaging in a bit of *Now don't get me wrong, some of my best friends drink, swear, enjoy ballet or are gay* happy talk, he got down to brass tacks, throwing out hunks of red meat to his political base. He equated asking Christians to accept marriage equality with " . . . asking someone who's Jewish to start serving bacon-wrapped shrimp in their deli . . . . We don't want to do that -- I mean, we're not going to do that. Or like asking a Muslim to serve up something that is offensive to him, or to have dogs in his backyard."

It's comments like that which will keep Huckabee from ever becoming the Republican nominee in '16. Or, if for some incredibly unforeseen turn of events he *does* capture the nomination, why he won't stand a chance of defeating Hillary Clinton -- or indeed, whomsoever the Democrats choose to be their standard bearer. And the reason why this is true is not merely because Huckabee persists in the demonstrably inane belief that homosexuality is a lifestyle choice. No, the reason why he will never become the Republican nominee -- and thus will never, ever become president of the United States -- is that his are the politics of what might be termed "moral exclusivity."

As nice and folksy a guy as Huckabee seems to be, his worldview is shaped by a handful of verses from the Biblical books of Leviticus, Deuteronomy and John. His beliefs, his way of looking at the world, are increasingly out-of-step with a growing majority of the American public, who are less and less concerned with so-called "values issues," and more and more motivated by matters of economy. Increasingly, people are coming to understand how ironic it is that those who most loudly and stridently decry the government's incursion into the

realm of individual privacy see nothing wrong in demanding that that same government regulate and control precisely that: individual privacy.

In other words, it's "*Don't you dare regulate our markets, our prayers, our voting booths, our environment or our gun closets; but please you must place strictures on women's health and what may or may not be taught in public schools.*" Mike Huckabee -- and people like him -- live in a bubble in which the vast majority are moral absolutists; whose reality is shaped by the Bible and those who interpret it for them. As such, they firmly believe that those who live different lives or hold on to different beliefs than they do are both imperfect and tainted, and must be saved.

In these, the earliest days of the 2016 presidential race, we see a highly fractionated Republican Party; one in which guys like Mike Huckabee, Rick Santorum and Dr. Ben Carson aim their appeals at religious stalwarts; Ted Cruz, Bobby Jindal and Marco Rubio at Tea Party acolytes; Rand Paul at Libertarians and Jeb Bush, Chris Christie and John Kasich at the so-called establishment faction. None, at least at this early date, has anything near to an across-the-board appeal. What will likely cause Republicans to coalesce around a single candidate won't be a common commitment to *what* they are for, as much as an agreement on *who* they are against.

And to you Governor Huckabee, has no one ever explained to you that for those who care, there are innumerable paths to the gates of heaven? And from what I understand, there is only one set of keys . . . which don't belong to you . . . or me or any other mortal being.

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