

HOMOSEXUAL TEACHERS

The problem is how to oppose homosexuality without being hostile towards homosexuals.

That is the problem, at least, for those who are committed to the heterosexual family style, and also to political freedom. It is a problem illuminated by the various efforts around the country to exclude homosexual teachers, by law or referendum.

Heterosexuality and homosexuality are not different ethnic styles. They are not just different cultural tastes. The heterosexual family style is the building block of civilized society. It is that, in the Jewish view. It is that, in the view of the American society. For any civilized society, the heterosexual family style is the only way to go. Any other course is self-destructive.

The heterosexual family style is not just a way of producing children. It is the main way in which social and generational responsibilities prevalently displace self-gratification as the central principle of human life. What is civilization without a concern for the future? Where is the concern for the future most seriously nurtured except in the heterosexual family setting?

That is why any society which does not wish to commit suicide must be officially biased in favor of the heterosexual style. That is why no society can foster law or teaching which holds that homosexuality is just an alternate life style to which it can be indifferent.

But none of this warrants a jump from the general principle to specific individuals. A given heterosexual individual can be infinitely more damaging to our civilizing principles than a given homosexual individual. A given homosexual individual can be more socially productive, worthy and concerned than a given heterosexual individual. That is one reason why a civilized society cannot fight homosexuality by punishing those individuals who are homosexual in their personal orientation.

There is another little matter: a democratic society does not punish people for what they think, for their associations, or for what they do in private which does not impinge on other people. Those are the principles of a free society which protects Jews, among others: freedom of private belief, freedom of association.

The proposals to exclude homosexual teachers do not add anything to our protection against a teacher who would try to promote homosexuality in the schools. As one State Department of Education has declared: "The current law is sufficient to protect pupils from sexual advances by teachers, whether homosexual or heterosexual, and to prevent teachers from promoting their sexual life style or preference in the classroom."

Since these proposals do not provide that protection, which already exists, what do they do? They make it possible to fire teachers just because they are homosexual, even if they do not promote or reveal that preference in the schools. That flies in the face of the maxim that people should be hired or fired because of what they do on the job; not because of what they believe or do off the job.

There have always been a percentage of homosexuals in our teachers corps. We did not know about their sexual orientation, which is the way it should be. Why now, start a witch-hunt into the private lives and beliefs of those teachers? Where would it end?

These proposals would even provide grounds for firing a heterosexual teacher who spoke out in some forum for the individual rights of homosexuals. That is a staggering incursion on free speech.

Such proposals seem to be about homosexuality, but they are not. They are about individual freedom. They do nothing which is needed to protect our traditional heterosexual family values; but they do much to destroy our traditional values of freedom.