

# Gen. Pace Vs. Parson Warner

By PATRICK J. BUCHANAN

"You may not be interested in war, but war is interested in you," said Leon Trotsky. And that is surely true of the culture war.

Before an editorial board of *The Chicago Tribune*, Gen. Peter Pace, chairman of the Joint Chiefs, not only endorsed presidential policy by which active homosexuals are discharged from the service, he declared that policy to be right morally.

"I believe homosexual acts between two individuals are immoral and that we should not condone immorality. I do not believe the United States is well served by a policy that says it is OK to be immoral in any way."

Equating homosexual sex with adultery, Pace added, "[I]f we find out so-and-so is sleeping with somebody else's wife," we do not tolerate it. As Pace was supporting policy, why did he find himself in a Beltway firefight?

The responses to Pace's moral assertions are indicative of the state of play, the correlation of forces, in America's culture war.

Speaker Nancy Pelosi seemed to duck the big question. "We need patriotic Americans who exist across the board in our population. We don't need a moral judgment from the chairman of Joint Chiefs."

But Pace never suggested gays were not patriotic. He said homosexual activity is outlawed in the service — and is immoral.

*The Washington Post* allowed as how Pace "is entitled to his opinions, of course," but should have considered the "impact of his public expression of intolerance on the men and women he commands."

But if declaring homosexual acts immoral is an "expression of intolerance," the *Post* is charging the Catholic Church and traditional Christians with 2,000 years of intolerance, as well as all U.S. Armed Forces prior to 1993, when homosexuals were routinely severed.

What do the moralists at the *Post* say of Pace's "intolerance" of adultery? Should the general have first considered the "impact of his public expression of intolerance" on the adulterers in the barracks or officers' club?

"Homosexuals serve admirably and openly — without fear of prosecution or sneering judgment — in 24 countries, including Israel," retorts the *Post*. Why Israel was brought in was not stated. And, yes, adulterers, too, have served honorably and heroically. But should, then, the ban on soldiers sleeping with other soldiers' wives also be lifted?

The questions raised by the *Post* are several:

What is immoral? Whose moral code do we consult? What is not only immoral but ought to be grounds for dismissal? For not everything that is immoral should be illegal and not everything that is illegal is immoral, as Catholics demonstrated during Prohibition.

Two Republican heavies have now weighed in. Ex-Sen. Alan Simpson, in a *Post* column, "Bigotry That Hurts Our Military," says he has grown since voting for "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" and now calls it "prejudice" to sever active homosexuals from the service.

He relates the story of Professor Alan Turing, a British homosexual who helped crack the Nazi code. "Would Pace call Turing immoral?" asks Simpson, who went from the GOP caucus to Harvard and now as faithfully parrots the latter's values as once he did the former's.

Good question. From what Simpson relates, Turing was a hero. But if Turing spent his nights cruising SoHo, he may not have led a moral life and ought not to be bunking in the barracks of Fighter Command. One may be patriotic in public service and immoral in private life. Lots of folks have been — even a few presidents.

It is John Warner, however, ex-chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, who hit the issue squarely. Of the moral beliefs of his fellow Marine, Parson Warner declared, "I . . . strongly disagree with the chairman's view that homosexuality is immoral."

This brings us to the heart of the matter. Is homosexuality — not the orientation, but the activity — inherently immoral?

On Pace's side, that homosexuality is immoral, we have the Bible and Koran, 2,000 years of Christianity, Orthodox Judaism, and natural law, the moral beliefs of virtually every society to the present, and the laws of every state before the 1960s. Up to 1973, psychiatrists treated it as a disorder. Nations where homosexuality is rampant have been regarded as "decadent."

Who, Sen. Warner, are the moral authorities for your assertion that homosexual conduct is moral — other than the Bishop Robinson wing of the Episcopal Church?

What this uproar tells us is that America is no longer a moral community. On the most fundamental issues — abortion, promiscuity, homosexuality, euthanasia, sterilization, cloning, and the creation of, and buying and selling of, fetuses for research — we are at war. What part of the nation sees as progress, the other sees as depravity.

And where there is no moral community, there will not long be one country. For in a religious or culture war, there is no peaceful coexistence.

One side wins, the other side loses.

As President Bush said, he who is not with us is against us.