

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, since the House adjourned early today, I thought I would take the opportunity to come to the floor to speak, as others have done in other forums this week, about a most unfortunate episode that happened earlier this week.

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In an interview on television, Senate Majority Leader TRENT LOTT spoke out about homosexuality in a way that I think maybe was unintentional by him, but, nonetheless, was very hurtful and harmful to people in the gay and lesbian community.

I know that we are not supposed to be urging the Senate to take action on issues, but, without violating that rules of the House, I just want to put in context my own remarks, and that is that there is a confirmation of a nomination of an ambassador, James Hormel, which is hopefully going to come up before the Senate soon.

This nomination was sent from the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to the full Senate, but Senator LOTT has not taken up the issue. It was in the context of an interview about that, I believe, that Senator LOTT made his unfortunate remarks about homosexuality, saying, "It is a sin; it is just like alcohol or sex addiction or kleptomaniacs." Then our own Majority Leader, Mr. ARMEY, said that homosexuality ". . . is a sin. I know it is. It is in the Bible," or words to that effect.

One of the issues that is being raised about Jim Hormel's nomination is that he was seen laughing at a parade where there were people dressed as nuns. Without going into that, I just want to say that between my husband and me and our five children, we have over 100 years, 100 years, of Catholic school education. This is a source of great pride to us and great strength to us. So we certainly have a great deal of respect for the clergy and the nuns who taught us and our children and would not want in any way for them to be demeaned, and I do not think that Jim Hormel has a demeaning bone in his body.

Jim Hormel is a very distinguished leader in our community in the San Francisco Bay area. He is a philanthropist. He has been the Dean of the Law School at the University of Chicago before he came to San Francisco. As I said, he is a great philanthropist, a supporter of the arts and education, is very respected in the business community, is an astute businessman and is a very effective leader. He would make a great ambassador, and his nomination, I think, is a tribute to President Clinton, that he had the courage to name Jim Hormel as ambassador to Luxemburg.

Jim Hormel, because he is gay, his nomination is being held up, and, as I say, unfortunately, the Leaders in the Senate and in the House have characterized his sexual orientation in a way that I think, as I say, is hopefully unintentionally, is most harmful to people in that community.

When we were little people we used to say "sticks and stones will break my bones, but names will never hurt me." But that really was not true then, and it is not true now. We have to be very careful about the power of words and the resonance that those words have as people repeat them and hear them.

It is ironic that this all should happen at a time which is Gay Pride Week throughout the country. Speaking for my own area that I have the privilege of representing, we are blessed in our community with a large gay and lesbian population, and we will have a large parade on Sunday where people who take pride in their own situation as well as their friends will take pride with them, and I will be very honored to join that parade.

I have never felt any bias from our own Majority Leader here, Mr. ARMEY, or Mr. LOTT, our former colleague in the House and now the distinguished Majority Leader in the Senate, because of my support for gay and lesbian rights. I have never thought that Mr. Hormel had ever demeaned my religion or said something or did something objectionable to my religion, Catholicism, because he may have been amused, if that is even so, by people dressed as nuns. Nuns do not even dress as nuns. It is not the same as it used to be.

But I think that it is time for us to have some reconciliation on this. We have to, and this will sound very San Francisco, I know, heighten the sensitivity of our colleagues to the hurt that it does to so many people in our country when they are demeaned by leaders of our country.

Mr. Speaker, I do think this maybe will provide us with an opportunity to say, you know, let us turn down the flame on this issue. The Bible, if we are quoting the Bible, has told my children, my husband and me for our lifetimes, as did our parents, that we are all God's children. They did not say you are all God's children, depending on your sexual orientation. They said we are all God's children, and, as such, worthy of respect, and in every person there is a spark of divinity that is to be respected.

It is that attitude toward people that I think drives many of us into the political arena to do God's work. I do not like to bring politics and religion together, but it is to respect what our religion teaches us for people, that we want everyone to have the same opportunities, whatever their color, their creed or their sexual orientation. Discrimination has no place in our country. Neither does characterization of people because they might be different from us have a place.

So I come to the floor tonight not to criticize, but to reach out to the two majority leaders, in the hope that we can put a stop to these characterizations which, as I say again, and I will say for a third time, may be unintentional, but are, nonetheless, very pain-

ful to the people that are described by them.

Jim Hormel is a great American. He is a patriotic American. He is somebody who would bring great honor to our country to represent us abroad. He has already accomplished a great deal just by his courage and by allowing his name to be put forth, and hopefully his nomination will culminate in his being the ambassador to Luxemburg. In any event, it will hopefully also achieve a reconciliation in our country about how we treat people, all people, all God's children. That is what the Bible told us.

As a Catholic, again, I particularly take issue with the fact that some have said that Jim Hormel's nomination is offensive to Catholics by saying, as Jim Hormel's friend, one of the great joys of my life is to be his friend. I would only hope that his nomination accomplishes the ending of discrimination in our country against people, regardless of their sexual orientation.

So in this Gay Pride Week, let us all take pride in each and every one of us, and particularly not make judgments about people for how they are not like us, but to respect them for what they are.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. THOMPSON (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for 10:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. today account of official business.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mrs. MALONEY of New York) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. CONYERS, for 5 minutes, today.
 Ms. NORTON, for 5 minutes, today.
 Mr. FILNER, for 5 minutes, today.
 Ms. WATERS, for 5 minutes, today.
 Ms. SANCHEZ, for 5 minutes, today.
 Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. MILLER of Florida) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. SCARBOROUGH, for 5 minutes, on June 24.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas, for 5 minutes, today and on June 24.

Mrs. CHENOWETH, for 5 minutes, on June 24.

Mr. BILIRAKIS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PAUL, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CRAPO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MICA, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Member (at his own request) to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:)