



Mary's Silence On Lesbian Squabble

By 365gay.com

Washington, D.C. - 365Gay.com has learned that the GOP outrage over Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry's remarks about Mary Cheney may have been orchestrated by Mary herself.

Sources close to the Bush-Cheney campaign tell 365Gay.com that the idea came up in a telephone call between Mary and her parents immediately after the presidential debate Wednesday night.

The younger Cheney, who serves as a backroom advisor to her father, suggested that she would continue to be a "issue" for Democrats unless something was done to stop it immediately.

Mary Cheney's sexuality has never been a secret. Prior to joining her father's 2000 campaign she worked as a gay and lesbian outreach coordinator for Coors Brewing Co. In 2000 she served in much the same function on her father's campaign.

This time, Mary is operating behind the scenes. But, in August, during a campaign stop in Davenport, Iowa, Cheney was asked about the President's support for a proposed amendment to the US Constitution. Cheney said he thought the issue should be left to the states, prefacing the remark with "Lynne and I have a gay daughter, so it's an issue our family is very familiar with."

During the GOP National Convention when Republican Senate hopeful Alan Keyes accused Mary Cheney of being a "sinner" and a "selfish hedonist" Dick and Lynne Cheney were silent.

Following Dick Cheney's acceptance speech at the convention the Vice President's family appeared on the stage - all but Mary Cheney who had been in the hall for the speech. Her absence led LGBT commentators to openly question whether she was being hidden away.

During the vice presidential debate when the issue of same-sex marriage came up Vice President Cheney said that "people ought to be free to choose any arrangement they want."

Democratic VP candidate John Edwards replied saying it was obvious that the Cheneys loved their daughter and that "you can't have anything but respect" for them. "I believe marriage is between a man and a woman and so does John Kerry," Edwards said.

That night Cheney thanked Edwards for the "kind words he said about my family and our daughter. I appreciate that very much."

What changed between then and last Wednesday's third and final Presidential debate? The fear within the GOP that Democrats were using Mary Cheney as a "wedge issue" to divide Republicans.

The proposed amendment to ban gay marriage in the Constitution failed in both the House and the Senate because a sizable number of Republicans, for various reasons, opposed the measure.

The "G" word, which Republicans had believed would serve as a rallying cry and drive moderate conservatives to the GOP was being turned against them.

To get back on track, using homosexuality to the Republican's advantage, could only be done, the source tells 365Gay.com, by going on the attack, accusing Kerry of "insensitivity" and putting Democrats on the defensive.

Within an hour of Kerry's remark Lynne Cheney accused Kerry of pulling a "cheap and tawdry political trick." The following morning the vice president called himself a "pretty angry father".

The play worked in drawing Democrats into the fray.

"I think that [Mrs. Cheney's complaint] indicates a certain degree of shame with respect to her daughter's sexual preferences," Elizabeth Edwards, shot back in an interview on ABC radio news.

For the remainder of the week the media focus was on John Kerry's innocuous comment about Mary Cheney, taking away from Kerry the opportunity to campaign on the war, the economy, and health care.

With the the race for the White House still too close to call, but indications Kerry has been gaining, Republicans hope to keep the Mary Cheney issue alive and Democrats on the defensive.

by Paul Johnson
365Gay.com Washington Bureau Chief
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