



PRESS RELEASE

April 29, 2013

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Outright Libertarians San Francisco chapter makes the following statement regarding SF Pride's about-face on the subject of Bradley Manning's election as an honorary Grand Marshall in this year's pride parade:

The traditional parades that accompany Pride celebrations in America today are meant to commemorate the Stonewall riots, when the LGBT community - deprived of power throughout history - finally fought back against institutionalized violence. Among them were activists who later helped establish the Libertarian Party.

Since that time, we have watched as the mainstream political establishment used our liberation movement for political gain, claiming the victories of equality activists on issues like marriage and the repeal of DADT for their own.

We will no longer remain silent.

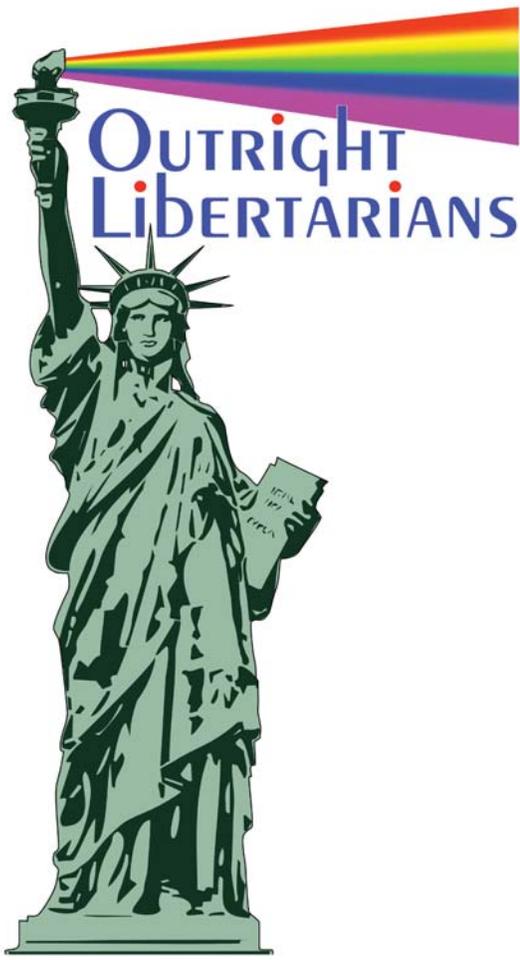
The struggle for dignity and liberation belongs universally to the oppressed, for only those who lack power have a need to demand it. The idea that decisions for the disempowered ought to be made only by an elite group of powerful people can't even properly be called a deception. It is not just false - it is absurd.

In a statement announcing the decision, Lisa Williams made this claim:

"...what these events have revealed is a system whereby a less-than-handful of people may decide who represents the LGBT community's highest aspirations as grand marshals for SF Pride."

While Williams neglected to disclose that the Board of Directors has only 9 members, we do agree with the premise: no group of people has the right to impose their will on any other. This is just one of the many reasons we believe that using executive power to overturn the votes of the 15 members of the Electoral College who elected Manning was not merely unjust, but unjustifiable.

This act of tyranny will not be tolerated.



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Far more disturbingly, Williams makes this claim in defense of an act that serves not the community, but the economic interests of the organization's powerful sponsors and the political ruling class.

In an article for the Guardian, Glenn Greenwald lists a few of these sponsors: AT&T and Verizon (enablers of George W. Bush's illegal warrantless wiretapping), Bank of America and Wells Fargo (implicated in major mortgage fraud scandals) and Clear Channel (broadcasters of conservatives Rush Limbaugh, Sean Hannity, and Glenn Beck).

And although Williams claims to be defending the community from the tyranny of minority interests, her own conflict of interest reveals that the decision is really about her aspirations for power in the political hierarchy. Greenwald goes on to say:

"It's anything but surprising that a person who was a loyal Obama campaign aide finds Bradley Manning anathema while adoring big corporations and banks [...] In so many liberal precincts in the Age of Obama the federal government, its military, and its federal prosecutors are to be revered and celebrated but not criticized; only those who oppose them are villains."

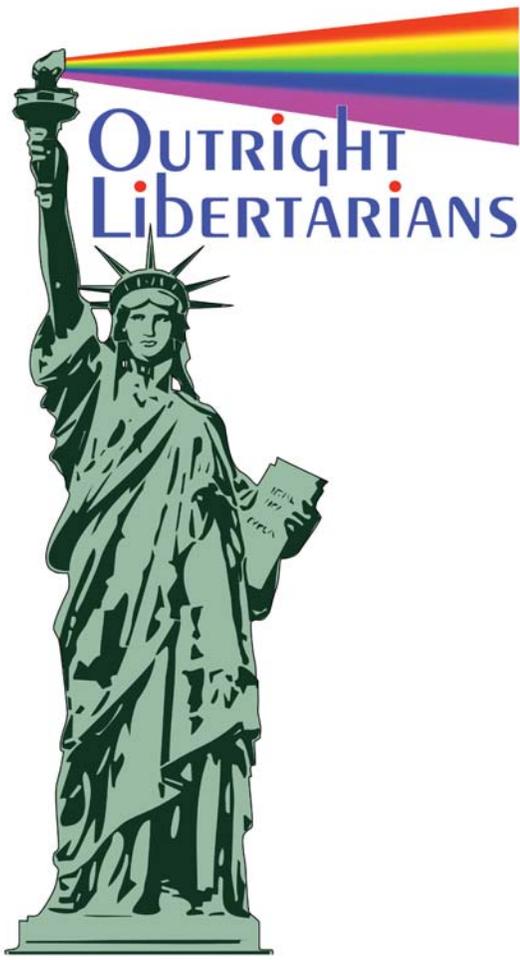
Lisa Williams' connections to the Democrats and President Obama include being the owner of One Source Consulting and coordinator of Barack Obama's pro forma campaign in the San Francisco Bay Area. As Antiwar.com's Justin Raimondo observes:

"Her motive is pragmatic rather than ideological: she is terrified that her organization - the Gay Pride committee - [...] will suffer further embarrassment as the purveyor of an inconvenient radicalism offensive to the higher-ups she is lobbying for a promotion."

Williams also claimed that "even the hint of support for actions which placed in harms way [sic] the lives of our men and women in uniform" would be "an insult to every one, gay and straight, who has ever served in the military of this country."

Meanwhile, honorary Outright Libertarians board member and openly gay Lieutenant Dan Choi of DADT fame had this to say in support of Manning's heroism, also at Antiwar.com:

"As we move forward as a country, we need truth in order to gain justice, you can't have justice without the whole truth ... So what he did as a gay



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American, as a gay soldier, he stood for integrity, I am proud of him."

In sharp contrast to Manning's incredible courage, we find the remarks of Lisa Williams - to say the very least - insulting and cowardly. While Bradley Manning suffers sexual abuse and humiliation in prison, she wears the organization like a fashion accessory in a self-serving parade of shame.

Not only does she not stand for the values of liberation, she can't even claim to represent the values of pride after caving to the demands of the political and economic establishment represented by the corporation-state she serves.

At a time when young Americans are struggling with issues of disempowerment, standing up to bullies and looking for role models, the fact that Bradley Manning risked his career, his safety, and possibly his life to stand for the Constitution fills the need for an example of putting principles above personal comfort in the face of injustice.

It is undeniable that the greatest patriot of the 21st century is an out gay man who proudly stood for his beliefs. Therefore, in the spirit of Stonewall, Outright Libertarians in San Francisco are calling for solidarity and a celebration of achievement, beauty and diversity in the face of state power. Every LGBT American - bourgeois or bohemian, white or brown, Christian or atheist - has won the equal right to freedom in expressing our patriotism and pride.

Lisa Williams says that any hint of support for Manning at San Francisco Pride will not be tolerated. We invite the entire community to demonstrate that we do not take marching orders from bullies.

Bradley Manning has done a service to our country, and his courage makes us proud.

Please contact Outright Libertarians for further details.

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References:

Lisa Williams @ LGBT Weekly : <http://goo.gl/3iY5Z>
Glenn Greenwald @ The Guardian : <http://goo.gl/As7ds>
Justin Raimondo @ Antiwar.com : <http://goo.gl/dbAs7>