Democrats should stop smirking over the election of white supremacist David Duke, running as a Republican, to a seat in the Louisiana legislature. Those whoconde the basest bigotry, for the sake of political expediency, should be ashamed to indulge in smugness in the matter.

Republicans did their best to dissociate themselves from the former Klansman, President Bush, and his opponent, while former President Reagan taped a radio spot for the anti-Duke candidate. Duke, Berry charged. "Republican strategy, implying Duke is the flame, flag unfurled. Republican position on affirmative action, busing.

Majority Whip Tony Coelho, in a column in the New York Times, went sailing over the precipice, flag unfurled. Republican position on affirmative action, busing.

Irate the major parties. In 1980 Tom Metzger, former grand dragon of the KKK, camplng in a white sheet, won not a piddling little state house seat in the Deep South, but a Democratic congressional primary in California.

In 1986, a follower of Lyndon B. Johnson secured the Democratic nomination for lieutenant governor of Illinois. If we accepted Coelho's logic, we could be compelled to inquire what it is about the Democratic philosophy which attracts wily creatures like Metzger and LaRouches to its banner.

What is it about the Democratic party that allows extremists like Lyndon B. Johnson to operate under its banner with impunity?

Republican disown their David Dukes; Democrats are increasingly willing to endure theirs, for the sake of their coalition. When it was disclosed in the course of the campaign that several advisors on a Bush ethnic task force had extremist backgrounds, the presidential candidate didn't stop to consider whether repudiating them would lose vores among Americans of Eastern European descent. He simply expedited them posthaste.

Republicans disown their David Dukes; Democrats are increasingly willing to endure theirs, for the sake of their coalition. When it was disclosed in the course of the campaign that several advisors on a Bush ethnic task force had extremist backgrounds, the presidential candidate didn't stop to consider whether repudiating them would lose votes among Americans of Eastern European descent. He simply expedited them posthaste.

Would that Democrats exhibited such fortitude. When the anti-Semitic of Steve Cokey hit the front pages last spring (in a series of lectures sponsored by the Nation of Islam, Cokey claimed there is an "international Jewish conspiracy," that Jewish doctors were injecting black children with the AIDS virus, and that the crucifix is a symbol of white supremacy), it took weeks of intense pressure for Chicago Mayor Eugene Sawyer to dismiss his aide.

As a mayoral spokesman explained it, Sawyer was reluctant to rid himself of Cokey because he was "afraid of a revolt in the black community."

This tolerance of hatred was raised to a national plane following the Atlanta convention. Two of the 12 members Jesse Jackson appointed to the Democratic National Committee (DNC) were Farrakhan ("Hitler was a great man") and Steve Cokey.

Would that Democrats exhibited such fortitude. When the anti-Semitic of Steve Cokey hit the front pages last spring (in a series of lectures sponsored by the Nation of Islam, Cokey claimed there is an "international Jewish conspiracy," that Jewish doctors were injecting black children with the AIDS virus, and that the crucifix is a symbol of white supremacy), it took weeks of intense pressure for Chicago Mayor Eugene Sawyer to dismiss his aide.

As a mayoral spokesman explained it, Sawyer was reluctant to rid himself of Cokey because he was "afraid of a revolt in the black community."

This tolerance of hatred was raised to a national plane following the Atlanta convention. Two of the 12 members Jesse Jackson appointed to the Democratic National Committee (DNC) were Farrakhan ("Hitler was a great man") and Steve Cokey.