

# A POLITICAL POINT OF VIEW

By Jim Goodrich

For the record, to my family members and posterity I would like to briefly make a few clarifications regarding some in-depth thoughts I have entertained on the subject of politics, and give a few reasons for an overall political position that has occasionally frustrated a few family members and friends with opposite political views.

In retrospect, I could have been more patient in listening to the words and political philosophies of others, rather than focusing on being a formidable political opponent. Perhaps others could have also softened their political approach and we could have each chosen to follow the admonition of Robert Lewis Stevenson, and I quote: "There is so much good in the worst of us, and so much bad in the best of us, that it behooves all of us not to talk about the rest of us," *Robert Louis Stevenson* and I might add: "find fault with any of us."

Politics is a subject that needs to be approached in discussion with caution and sensitivity. The many complexities involved seem to leave room for disagreement and misunderstanding, particularly when defining differences between conservative political beliefs and liberalism.

One thing cannot be denied; money and power often go together in a corruptive way, and they can have a devastatingly negative influence from one end of the political spectrum to the other. As the saying goes; "Figures never lie, but a liars always figure." Politicians have learned how to figure, as it has become almost impossible for them to win elections without compromising at very least a few of his or her ethical standards and becoming a puppet of those individuals and corporations with special interests, at least to some degree, as campaign financing has become critical to political success.

I personally feel more comfortable sustaining a politician that is considered a centrist; one leaning a little to the left on social programs, supporting legislation that best addresses the needs of the poor and the downtrodden within our society, as they are the least represented; And a candidate leaning to the right in regards to moral issues. I believe I do have an understanding as to how the pendulum swings. As a result of that near perpetual motion, our legislators never properly address many important matters of political business.

There too, will always be those members of our society that will take advantage of the system, or politicians that will thwart the best interests of the general population when compromising their honor and integrity will benefit them personally. I prefer to align myself with the words of a legendary western marshal who died in 1921 as a sports editor for the New York-Morning Telegraph, Bat Masterson, and I quote: "There are those who argue that everything breaks even in this dump of a world of ours. I suppose these ginks who argue that way hold that because the rich man gets ice in the summer and the poor man gets it in the winter things are breaking even for both. Maybe so, but I'll swear that I can't see it that way."  
*Bat Masterson*

In the world as we know and understand it, capitalism is certainly the better choice over some of the alternatives, such as; communism, socialism, theocracies advocating the philosophies of men, mingled with scripture, and of course, despotic rule. However, in a capitalistic society, boards of directors of large corporations do not often make decisions based on conscience, only profit. Smaller companies are forced to follow suit in order to stay in business. Occasionally, some of the flaws within capitalism that negatively impact society becomes exposed and a few greedy executives go to jail. But powerful corporate political influence upon the administrative, legislative, and judicial branches of our government has had a negative impact and it has caused these instances of justice to be far and few between. We are learning that in the business world the environment and ethics are only secondary considerations, at least in most instances.

It is not reasonable to consider capitalism will ever be part of a heavenly economy, as like the others, it is too calloused and allows for positive social and political discrimination in favor of a select few. In our generation there have only been two major political parties capable of winning elections. Both parties have been plagued with scandal and corruption, particularly among those members of congress who happen to be in the majority at the time, those that can wield a sword of power over others by way of political influence in behalf of those individuals and companies to which they have become indebted.

A large segment of our society is truly ashamed of the moral decay that exists in the Democratic Party, and the hypocritical self-righteous attitude that permeates throughout the Republican Party. They too, realize that many of the philosophies within the Libertarian Party are extremely radical, and would only work if mankind were capable of individually policing themselves in an honorable way, as libertarians do not believe that government is capable of regulating much of anything. There is no prospect of major governmental deregulation without society as a whole, or a majority at very least taking the necessary initiatives that would place us on the moral high road. Those qualities do not presently exist in our culture, as we are snowballing toward becoming a godless society with moral standards approaching those of Sodom and Gomorrah.

The ACLU and their actions in supporting the civil rights of various individuals and organizations can be easily defended, or impeached. I do not believe the ACLU has benefited mankind in a majority of their actions. However, without ACLU involvement in some important issues, many individuals and groups would have arrogantly trampled many god-given civil liberties provided to us under the constitution under foot. And they would have done so under the pretext of righteousness.

Abortion issues and gay rights legislation has caused much controversy over the years. Godly instinct and common sense tells us that the immoral behavior that makes it necessary for us to address these issues is wrong. Can we be against abortion, yet support a woman's right to choose? Perhaps: certainly in the case of rape, incest, and the health of the mother. Should taxpayer dollars be used to finance the abortion of unwanted embryos from negligent unexpected pregnancies? Probably not! Should we farm and harvest embryos for the purpose of stem cell research? I personally believe there are ways of advancing stem cell research other than scientifically producing embryos.

What is society's responsibility? It appears that those most vocal in support of anti-abortion laws are the ones least likely to support legislation that will provide for the care of the unwanted little babies these individuals indicate they are trying to protect. Shouldn't a civil society want to see that food, clothing, shelter, education, and health care is provided to all of the millions of helpless little children that are totally dependant upon our compassion and generosity? Those children in our country and throughout the world, who's parents have abandoned them, or have denied them adequate parental care in other ways? Who is willing to share the costs, financial and otherwise, in protecting and instilling moral values into these little children by giving them the necessary tools to one-day survive as honorable and productive adult members of our society? And what segment of our society will determine what those moral values are? These are not easy questions to answer without each one of us making some fearless and searching inward observations, and then acting upon our righteous conclusions.

If Americans were all willing to sacrifice some of the luxuries in life to provide a hand up to many in our society that presently can not see any way out, the rewards would be insurmountable, as per capita productivity would increase beyond imagination. If we were all motivated to sacrifice ten percent of the square footage in our homes, this would go a long way toward sheltering the homeless in our country.

I am told that our society here in America has become the most violent of any nation on earth. When witnessing the violence stemming from the hatred and envy that is presently taking place in the Middle East and other parts of the world, it is difficult to understand how our nation could be worse. In our country, one in one hundred and forty-two U.S. residents are now in prison, and that increases by nearly

five percent annually. It appears the majority of our citizenry prefers putting money into prisons rather than appropriating funds that would go toward crime prevention programs; Funds that would be made available to better address the issues of the poor from single parent family environments in the urban areas, and foster homes of unwanted little children that have not been aborted. These types of expenditures are considered unnecessary entitlements by the wealthy and upper middle class within our society. How much money do these people think it costs to prosecute, house, or monitor one percent of our population through the judicial system and department of corrections?

What about the mental, emotional, and financial costs to victims of crime and their families resulting from a lack of parental guidance and negligent societal concern toward past and future perpetrators during those very important formative years?

The enormous costs in the enforcement of civil and criminal laws could more often be avoided with a decrease in the crime rate. It certainly appears that society would benefit, not only financially, but also in a host of other ways by investing in social programs that will contribute to the long-term reduction of crime. These are all moral issues that need political attention and answers through legislation. Yet, there are those that say we cannot legislate morality.

Is it possible to be against homosexual behavior and still support some of the civil liberties aspects to gay rights legislation? I believe it is. Should legal matrimonial relationships only be shared between a man and a woman? I believe it should remain that way, as procreation was the intention of the first commandment given to mankind from God. (Genesis 1: 28) (The Family: A Proclamation to the World) He instituted the first marriage and set the boundaries that have remained through the ages, (Genesis 2: 20-24) (Matthew 19: 3-6) and they have only been challenged in America to any great degree in these past few decades. In recent years our nation's moral standards have dipped so low that one is now negatively labeled as homophobic in our society if they were to openly disapprove of homosexual behavior and the lifestyle it encourages.

It is a tragedy that voluntary public prayer has been taken out of our schools, but that shouldn't prevent us from keeping a prayer in our hearts, or having prayer in our homes. Personal prayer at any time and in any place cannot be taken from us. I would not be surprised if many of those members of our society that are so verbal in articulating their negative thoughts about prayer being taken out of our schools are not having regular personal prayer, or participating in family prayer in their homes. Which are more important?

The prophet Joseph Smith has been quoted as having said that the constitution would one day hang, as it were, by a thread. It appears he was referring to our day. Is society prepared to endure the consequences from not heeding commandments from God and disregarding the words of modern-day prophets? Our posterity will need to be spiritually reinforced in order to withstand the tribulations they will likely be confronted with in the coming years. Like an Ostrich, most of our society prefers burying their heads in the sand and ignoring the obvious.

It is important to be informed and involved in local and national politics, but it certainly appears impossible to embrace all of the planks within the platform of any of our political parties and be one hundred percent correct in the eyes of God.

***Jim Goodrich***  
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