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[FisCon,SoCon,Soon We Have an Ex-Con?](#)

Posted by [dratpatrol](#) ([Profile](#))

Saturday, June 20th at 12:55AM EDT

1 Comment

Pardon the double entendre in the title, but it points (pointedly, I might add) at an issue raised in my last post, wherein apparently otherwise honorable people chose to wax vitreolic not so much at my writing (I was summarily dispensed with), but, rather, at semantic differences in terminology.

Allow me at the outset to apologize for not defining the terms I used, for it was clear that, by the end, although others had followed their perspectives to their “logical” end, they had indeed supported my contention, assuming *my* terms. My main point was that being an economic conservative and a social liberal was oxymoronic, and some very tenacious minds took me to task for the comment, apparently because I had struck a personal nerve. Thus I feel some obligation to explain myself (and, thusly, my perspective), perhaps in order to make some sense for myself about just *what* I think. Since this is a diary, I’m allowed to pontificate, and to do so without mass quantities of erudition, no? If I’m stupid, you’re stupid for paying attention to me, n’est-pas? Albeit, the discussion is not without merit, for I suspect that much of the conservative disunity lies in abortive cross communication, and if there were a common standard, we’d have fertile grounds for discussion, and not just hollow, angry rhetoric.

An economic conservative, to me, seems almost self-explanatory. He, or she, doesn’t want to take money from those who have it and he or she (henceforth referred to as the gender ”inclusive”, third-person singular “he” from the Old Days) doesn’t want to be *forced* to redistribute it to those who did not earn it. His economic conservatism thus bleeds, logically, into the social sphere where such redistribution might take place. For instance, Roe v. Wade is an economic issue to him because he believes that he should not have to pay via taxes for others to have the “right” to an abortion, and he abhors the taxpayer dollars distributed to, say, Planned Parenthood.

This economic, or fiscal, conservative also wants Adam Smith unshackled and Ayn Rand to “bust a move” on federal subsidies, and wants big government out of his shorts, in short. He sees the ultimate expression of Americanism as the Individual, who sinks or swims on his own. If someone will not work, neither let him eat, etc. According to some Libertarian literature I received in the past, this is where Republicans find some commonality with the aforementioned crowd.

However, such commonality dissolves when it comes to social conservatism. This explains why someone like me is not a Libertarian, and never will be. I cannot express a reverence and respect for our Original Documents without conceding their religious underpinnings. Although many are aware of the Federalist Papers, many are, by contrast, completely *unaware* of Samuel Rutherford and *Lex Rex*, a series of pamphlets written by Rutherford, a Scottish Presbyterian, to which the Founding Fathers owed much of their social sensibilities. Now, I’m no scholar, but it is even clear to me that, Deist or otherwise, the Founders took the imprimatur of freedom directly from the absolutes they held, ironically enough, absolutely, in a God Who Had Spoken (thank you, Francis Shaffer). Thus, if I am to be a consistent Constructionist, I *must* concede that the Constitution speaks with a moral, and not just ethical voice. This can only be what explains, for instance, the consternation of those involved in writing the document when they viewed their own actions in regard to slavery. Although their response was tepid, wan, and unsatisfactory, the fact that they found it a bitter pill to swallow speaks volumes of a deep sense of morality colliding with the hypocrisy of their actions. They did not act... but they knew better! But I digress.

One commentator on my last post brought up a valid point when he said I confused social issues with, I believe, social programs. I did within the context of the post, but I do not think, as he seemed to indicate, that they are unrelated. Clearly, a social conservative wants to keep government out of charity, for instance, believing that local entities respond more efficiently and wisely than the Welfare Department. The social conservative believes, rightly, that FDR and the WPA did more to extend the Great Depression than to help it (though you couldn’t convince my mother of that, who lived through it as a child). When it comes to social issues, however, what makes him conservative seems to be “grayer”. Does he, like the Libertarians, take a “hands-off” approach to others’ behaviors? Would he go as far as William Buckley in advocating decriminalizing drugs? That hardly seems conservative, and in fact, is not within keeping of most socially conservative perspectives. Yet it augures for the individual over societal control, which is within keeping of most conservatives; thus, according to the CATO Institute, the modern conservatives hails from the roots of the “classic liberal”, vis-a-vis Thomas Jefferson and the like.

For me, social conservatism abides in a sense of minimalist governmental interdiction, protection of religious

liberties without foisting of the same on others, and a debriding, if you will, of social licentiousness or libertine actions, recognizing that, like Viktor Frankl saw, there is a difference between freedom and liberty, and that freedom invites responsibility. Having said that, however, I differentiate myself from other social conservatives in that I tend to, for instance, want to see no innocents go to prison in exchange for a few guilty people skating by (and I'd hold the D.A. liable) rather than insure that every guilty person gets caught, even if that means innocent people go to prison. The last is a socially conservative (and tenable, if argued well) position. Since I work in a prison, I wrestle with this last issue on a personal level, so sorry if it seems esoteric. If the disallowance of the rule of law ever gets you caught up in the "system", you might end up thinking that it isn't quite so esoteric anymore. There but for the grace of God go I, you know? But belief in the rule of law (and Blackstone over those prick Benthamites) is also a socially conservative perspective. So now things become muddied and a bit convoluted.

In the end, I think there's inextricable links between economic and social conservatism that either serve to point out the inconsistencies in one's position or, if the bindings are acknowledged, manage to create a meaningful whole. From the latter perspective we *can* speak, from the former we persuade no one and we continue to squabble uselessly in the henhouse. At this point, however, the fox is not guarding the henhouse, he's in the White House, and hungry for some chicken pot pie. If we at least concede that our personal imbroglios may have led us into various inconsistencies, who's to say that we couldn't live with some oxymorons, as long as we share the basics and learn to become pistol-packing chickens- since we ALL agree on the 2nd Amendment, no?

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I checked you last post

[civil truth](#) Saturday, June 20th at 1:32AM EDT ([link](#))

Boy did that kick off a memorable donnybrook.

I'm not sure you managed to land the plane in this diary. Some very interesting thoughts, but perhaps you could add something more that would tie things together.

[And Rightly So!](#)

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