

Conservatives Never Tell It Like It Is



Send him mail.

"Food for Thought" is an original column appearing every other Tuesday at Everything-Voluntary.com, by Norman Imberman. Norman is a retired podiatrist who loves playing piano, writing music, lawn bowling, bridge, reading, classical music, going to movies, plays, concerts and traveling. He is not a member of any social network, nor does he plan on becoming one. Archived columns can be found [here](#). FFT-only RSS feed available [here](#).

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I was sitting at my desk when I suddenly realized that I have never heard a speech or read an article by any conservative that focused on basic principles as the starting point for their conclusions. Although I do agree with most of their conclusions, there are many conclusions with which I disagree. The arena where I disagree places me a great distance from them, a distance almost as far as I am from the liberal point of view.

Of course, my distance from the liberal point of view is vast. Liberals don't even know what a basic principle is, or at least don't have any use for basic principles and definitions. As such, their conclusions are without merit. Sometimes they may fortuitously come to a right conclusion, a conclusion with which I agree. But that's just an accident.

Why have I never heard basic principles discussed by conservatives? First and foremost, let's define our terms. A basic principle is a fact of nature (man's nature, when it comes to politics) that is true 100% of the time. For example, the following are two undeniable basic principles pertaining to man: 1) It's man's nature to always act in such a way as to try to increase his satisfaction or reduce his dissatisfaction. Even a person who seems to be behaving in such a way as to sacrifice himself for another, does so thinking that it will give him greater satisfaction than if he didn't act that way. 2) It's in man's nature to create, acquire, enjoy, produce, trade, and share property. Property is the idea that binds all men together.

I find that conservatives start their premises somewhere in the middle, without reference to principles. What they consider as principles are just patriotic slogans. Witness the present Republican National Convention.

However, identifying basic principles is not enough to come to valid conclusions. Words

have meanings and therefore it is incumbent upon thinking people to define their terms, which gives one the advantage of knowing what one is talking about. In defining words, no definition can contradict a definition on which it depends, since the identification of a contradiction indicates that an error is being committed.

In a political context, the key words or ideas that must be defined, as a basic beginning, are property, ownership, coercion, crime, moral or immoral.

With the above in mind, why don't conservatives talk about basic principles and define their terms? All they mention in their speeches and articles are patriotic clichés that have no meaning when divorced from definitions. They talk about patriotism, constitutionalism, the Founding Fathers, the flag, freedom and sacrifice.

Here is their problem. If a conservative talk show host or politician gave a speech with the intention of educating the public about the reasons why they come to the conclusions they reached, and if they did begin with what I would consider, valid basic principles and definitions, they would never be able to substantiate the policies, platforms and conclusions that they support. Their hypocrisy would immediately become obvious.

For example, property can widely be defined as man's *life*, the *products of his life*, and perhaps, his *ideas*, *innovations* and *inventions*. (His children are not his property). In addition, ownership is the word used to connect the idea of property with the action that one can take with respect to that property. To own something gives one the exclusive right to do with it whatever he wants provided he doesn't use it to interfere with the property of another. Theft is defined by everyone as the taking of a person's property without his permission. So we can see that the definition of theft depends upon the prior definition of property. The concept of property is required before the concept of theft comes into being. The old worn out maxim that, "all property is theft," is nonsense since it contains an internal contradiction. For something to be stolen it must be considered someone's property first.

A crime is defined as any purposeful interference with the property of another. Once again the definition of crime depends upon the prior definition of property. When a crime is committed, it is committed through an act of coercion, which is the forceful interference with property as opposed to the accidental interference with property.

Property is a central concept that binds the action of exchange with human action. Property does not automatically pop up out of the ground ready to be used by man. All things we see above ground other than life itself were created or produced by the effort of man. Therefore, the man who creates a product owns it—it is rightfully his property. If he trades it for some other form of property, the new item becomes his property. In fact the very existence of possessive pronouns in language demonstrates that ownership and

property are natural to the human species.

Another word that requires defining is moral or immoral. People can argue this definition until they are blue in the face so I'll simplify the definition. All politicians should be able to agree, to a minimum, that theft and coercion are immoral—a wrong act. Surely all politicians teach their children that theft and coercion are wrong. Surely all religions teach that theft and coercion are wrong or immoral. All people look upon theft and coercion with opprobrium, even the thief.

With these basic ideas in mind, how can any politician stand on his podium and proceed to legislate any law that allows the government to steal (coerce) something from some and give it to those to whom it doesn't belong? How can they proceed to legislate any law that allows the government to regulate (coerce) how a businessman can administrate his business? How can they proceed to legislate any law that allows the government to decide (coerce) what prices a person can ask for his goods? How can they proceed to legislate any law that allows the government to dictate (coerce) how much rent a landlord can charge? How can they proceed to legislate any law that allows the government to perpetrate any action, which if perpetrated by an individual, would be considered a crime? Aren't they all immoral criminal acts?

That is why no one, whether they are a Republican or Democrat, conservative or liberal, looks the television camera square in the eye and tells it like it is. That is why politicians only talk the issues and statistics—not principles and definitions. All politicians must give the appearance of being good well-meaning humanitarians but upon careful analysis, they must sanction and condone non-humanitarian egregious activities in order to get their programs enacted into coercive law.

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