

# Why the Schism?

*"Food for Thought" is an original column appearing sporadically, by Norman Imberman.*

The debates and arguments continue. Both sides can't understand why their opponents can't see their own point of view. The battles between Progressives/Liberals and Libertarian/Conservatives are the most vociferous. Why does such contentiousness exist? Here is my analysis. It boils down to some specific realizations.

## **Realization One (The Contradiction Problem)**

Many years ago I had a discussion with a friend who was a liberal and I was at that time a conservative. We could never see eye to eye. It was a frustrating time for me and I guess for him too. After many months of political bickering, I said during one of our debates, "Can't you see the contradictions and inconsistencies in your arguments?" His response was very revealing, which was, "Who said I must be without contradiction. Where is it written that I must be consistent?" I realized at that moment that all of my efforts to convince him of my position were futile from the start. There can be no understanding between those who adhere to an epistemology based upon reality and those who don't have any epistemology whatsoever as their guide. In a serious discussion with an opponent it is essential to come to an agreement that contradictions do not exist in reality and the identification of a contradiction is evidence that an error has been made. Without agreement on that subject do not go any further.

## **Realization Two (The Basic Principles Problem)**

Progressives/Liberals and most Conservatives have no use for basic principles so they have developed a knack for obscuring the basic principle argument by quoting history, discussing only issues instead of ideas, presenting their opponents with statistics, and false analysis of causality. With no basic principles as a guide for their thinking, all they have to fall back upon is their feelings and the discussion of issues and their own false interpretation of history. The discussion of issues without an agreement upon basic principles becomes a "says you, says me" debate destined for nowhere and ending in frustration.

## **Realization Three (The Language Perversion Problem)**

As described in his book *1984*, George Orwell wrote about the perversion of language by the tyrannical government in the story. In the story, citizens were brainwashed into accepting new definitions of words as a method of mind control. Liberals today have no carefully thought out definitions for the words they use, nor do they desire to think about it. When pressed to define their terms they respond with something on the order of, "I don't

have to define my terms. Everybody knows what I mean. You are just trying to trick me.” University professors have been the main harbingers of this philosophy. Today important words, like freedom, slavery, crime, theft, kidnapping, and fraud have become obfuscated by Progressives/Liberals. For example, in the past, theft has been defined and understood by everyone as the taking of one’s property without their permission and is considered to be wrong (immoral). Progressives/Liberals have made a mockery of the word when they agree with that definition and agree that theft is wrong but then claim that government redistribution of wealth is not theft, even though the act of “redistribution” falls within the definition of theft. The same is true for the word “taxation.” In order to assuage their guilt, they claim that taxation and redistribution of wealth is a “necessary evil.” I ask, “Necessary for whom?” My answer is, “Necessary for those who profit from the evil.” Words are not just a means of communication. They give the speaker the inestimable value of knowing what one is talking about. The result of arguing with a person who perverts words can only be frustrating, resulting in a feeling of enmity toward one’s opponent.

### **Realization Four (The Structural Problem)**

The various sciences have developed a conceptual hierarchical structure upon which to stand. It is the axiomatic discoveries (principles) and the concepts that are built upon those basic principles that enable them to be considered a science. The result is the fantastic progress that has been made by science, thus giving mankind benefits that could never be imagined before the industrial revolution. All structures (even societal structures) must be built from the ground up. Libertarians and even conservatives realize this when they support the basic principles of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. With all of its flaws, those documents began with basic principles. Conservatives and Libertarians respect those documents. In addition, books like *Restoring the American Dream*, *The Market for Liberty*, *Liberty a Path to Its Discovery*, *Atlas Shrugged*, *The Mainspring of Human Progress*, *Human Action*, *Common Sense Economics*, *Taming the Violence of Faith*, and *The Road to Serfdom* all present a coherent structure that results in very similar conclusions.

Karl Marx had tried, but failed, to present a logical basis for his conclusions in *The Communist Manifesto*. He presented no basic foundation for his ideas and the tome has been discarded as a foolish if not an evil instrument of destruction. Ask any Liberal to explain his own ideology of society it will become obvious that he never thought about it in spite of the fact that he can go on adamantly describing how a society should function, based upon his wishes, dreams, whims and prayers, as if his feelings were tools of cognition. Where are the ideas behind his methods and conclusions? There are none.

### **Realization Five (The Values and Goals Problem)**

This realization is most disturbing. Since the establishment of our Republic all voters and

politicians had the same goals in mind for our country no matter what side of the political spectrum they stood upon. They stood united. That has changed. The goal of the Libertarian ideology is freedom, while the goal of Liberals is equality and leveling of the playing field in all areas. It is easy to see that such different goals must utilize different methods. Once again there can be no meeting of the minds among the opposing factions. Creating equality and a level playing field in all areas must, by necessity, utilize coercion as its method of achievement, since equality and level playing fields do not exist in nature. The coercion takes the form of taxation (theft), regulation (force), behavior-by-permission (force), wage laws (force), rent control laws (force), eminent domain, (theft), Social Security (force and fraud). Corruption becomes a way of life for the politicians who, with their corruption, also set an example for some members of the private sector. The use of these tactics might get the Liberals their goals in the short run but they will feel the pain and evil of it on their own hides and everyone else's hides in the long run. If freedom is no longer a value, slavery takes precedence. It has already begun. Witness the chaos and slavery encroaching upon our nation at this time. It is only the beginning.

### **Realization Six (The General World-View Problem)**

The world-view of the opponents is totally out of phase with each other in all areas of inquiry, epistemologically and metaphysically. Where one sees freedom, the other sees slavery. Where one sees profit, the other sees exploitation. Where one sees self-defense, the other sees aggression and murder. Where one sees moral action, the other sees immoral action. Where one sees redistribution of wealth, the other sees theft. Where one sees taxation, the other sees theft. Where one sees that A is A, the other sees that A is non-A. Where one believes in the existence of an objective reality, the other believes in the subjectivism of reality. The differences are irreconcilable. Beware, my right-wing and libertarian friends: if early in a discussion with an opponent you identify any one of the above realizations, walk away, for you are embarking upon an act of futility. Beware, my left-wing opponents: if early in a discussion with an opponent you identify any of the above realizations, walk away, for you are embarking upon an act of futility.

The above points represent what in my opinion causes the rift between the left and the right, but both suffer from the same disease and favor coercion (involuntary action).

It's my opinion that all people who reason in harmony with reality will come to the same conclusions. Thus, if the liberals and conservatives of this world took notice of the points in this essay and took up the challenge of adhering to respect for the concepts of "consistency, non-contradiction, syllogisms, principles" and realized the necessity of consistently defining basic words like freedom, slavery, theft, coercion, fraud, moral, immoral, etc., they would come to the same conclusions as the voluntaryists of this world (those who support the doctrine of only voluntary action). The schism would end.

All six of these realizations are explanations for the failure of the opponents to reach an understanding and reasons for the continuing antagonism they feel towards each other. Both factions cannot be correct. It is not just a mere difference of opinion. If the Progressive/Liberal world-view of reality continues to take precedence, the world will return to the dark ages. The same is true for the Conservative/Republican world-view. Once people understand and embrace the Science of Voluntaryism view of reality the result will be more prosperity, security and happiness than the world has ever experienced.