Porche Or Pony Essay, Research Paper

Will that be a Porsche or a Pony?

by Scott Carpenter

Perhaps I’m getting cynical in my old age but it seems to me that the primary difference between most political ideologies, primarily conservatism and liberalism, is rate of speed. Indeed, the only difference may be that one moves faster than the other towards the demise of our existence as a free people. The platforms put forth by either side reflect less and less a concrete difference in principle and more and more a differing in opinion regarding just how quickly the chains of slavery should be fastened.

Canada is an excellent example of this phenomena as politics can best be summed up in one way: The liberals believe that the road to hell is best traveled in a Porsche at top speed; the conservatives prefer to get there in a pony. The problem is they are both on the same damn road.

Consider a recent town forum in a remote community in Northern British Columbia where the provincial justice critic comes to listen to the resident’s fears regarding Canada’s new gun control legislation. “This legislation is a waste of taxpayers money!” states Geoff Plant (provincial justice critic and Liberal MLA). He continues: “Now I agree that we need some kind of gun control but this legislation goes too far and it’s just too damn expensive.”

Sounds agreeable doesn’t it? It’s true that this legislation is too expensive to enforce and it is also true that it is intrusive and immoral but if we role back the clock a bit we’ll find something very interesting: This argument is similar to the one that opponents of private firearms ownership used thirty years ago. Back then we all knew that gun control laws were asinine. They do nothing except infringe on property rights, limit our ability to defend ourselves and punish the good guys. The argument used against gun owners was simple: “We need something to curb the crime rate… anything… something simple and cost effective. The least you uncaring callous bastards can do is give us that!” Isn’t it strange that we are now arguing the position our opponents took all those years ago? Does anyone not see a problem with this?

The sticker, as one individual pointed out to our friendly justice critic, is that all political parties have essentially divorced basic principles from the political process. All political agendas now lead to the same place: moral nihilism.

When cornered on the issue our justice critic was evasive: “You have to be careful when you mix principle with politics….” he lectures, “What if someone doesn’t agree with your principles? How do you use the tax payers money for one thing when you have another group of people who want it used for another?” A very deep and troubling question indeed. For a man with an ivy league education and experience as a constitutional lawyer you’d think he’d have seen the obvious problem with it. You see, he should have asked: “Why is tax payer money being used to fulfill anyone’s political agenda?” Wouldn’t it make more sense to leave people and their money alone to choose how, when and where it should be spent? Doesn’t this eliminate the problem of special interests vying for tax dollars they didn’t earn? The question shouldn’t be “Who gets what money?”, but rather “Why do any groups get any tax money at all?” This is the problem with separating principles from politics. It leads only to the difference between a Porsche and a pony.

Practical politics divorced from fundamental philosophical premises reduces politics to nothing more than a bad joke with a constantly changing punch line. If a politician does not stand on any principles then how does he know the difference between right and wrong? How does he know which way to vote when new legislation is introduced? The only tool available to him is public opinion and the last time I looked having the majority backing you does not imply that your stance is immediately the correct one. If it were, then Hitler’s treatment of minorities would have been considered moral – he did after all have the majority of the German people behind him. This is the reason we are on this nihilistic road to begin with; pandering to the majority or those with the money does not mean that the choices politicians make are the right ones. Moreover, it creates such a mess of contradictions within the political system that unraveling the tangle and starting over is almost impossible. Frankly, I don’t know which is worse: A system of pure collectivist principles or one of no principles at all? At least with collectivism/communism there is a definable enemy which one may engage and debate. The only thing that is not left to question is the common consequence of both systems: Tyranny.

Ultimately, this brings into question the legitimacy of the electoral process itself. I do not vote for the purpose of choosing how sharp a knife I would like to cut my own throat with. Granting individuals office does not mean that I have given them permission to violate my rights, steal my money and confiscate my property. What is the point of voting once every four years simply to change my master? One dictator is essentially as bad as the next; whether I am commanded by one man, Liberals, New Democrats or Conservatives the problem remains the same: I am commanded.

The system in which we live is entrenched. At this point it would appear that working within it is a fools game. In the end, we cannot expect politicians and bureaucrats who have garnered their power through a corrupt and nihilistic system to change things simply because we ask them. Geoff Plant said himself during this town forum that it was highly unlikely that the firearms law would either be defeated in the supreme court challenge or through any other political process. He even went as far to say that if the province of BC refused to cooperate with the feds on this law once his party took power that it wouldn’t stop Ottawa from forcing us to comply on their own. Well… at least he was honest about that.

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