

PART 13: DEMOCRATIC PARTY (LIBERAL) VALUES AND WORLDVIEW

This part and the next two parts of the essay present the Democratic and Republican views as much in their own terms as I can. This part and the next two give some explanation for the naked assertions of Part 1 and Part 2. It helps to try to think like “them”, something neither Party nor its clients do much. If portions of these parts are fuzzy, please go back to the previous part. It gives some background. For each Party, I give the mix of practical and moral reasons that it uses. I do not always go into detail on what is a moral argument and what is a practical argument so please be alert. I do not try to “get into the heads” of Republicans or Democrats to describe how they actually think. That is a different kind of project, one for which I have little ability.

I do not assess the truth of the points below under “values and worldview” for either Party. These are only my observations. I do not share most of the views. Mostly I write in the voice of someone in the Party who speaks as much truth as he-she knows. I tried to keep sarcasm minimal. Sometimes my view mixes with my statement of other people’s views.

Democrats often call themselves “Liberals” and Republicans use “Liberal” as an insult, so sometimes I use the term “Liberal” here for variety instead of always using “Democrat”. Keep in mind what I said above about Democrats not being like original Liberals and that we should not use the term “Liberal” wrongly for Democrats.

Democrats say the economy is intrinsically unfair. It intrinsically favors the rich at the expense of the poor and the working class. What happens to the working class and middle class depends on the period of American history but, since about 1975, economic life has not gotten better for them and they have faced much of what the poor and working class face. The lives of the working class and middle class are insecure now too.

The unfairness is enough to keep the working class and the poor on the bottom of the hierarchy and to hurt the quality of their lives, including the lives of their children. The poor and working class can never get enough good jobs, with enough pay and benefits, to stay healthy, and give their children enough quality education, so their children advance. The enduring lower class lives below the minimum level of human decency, especially for modern America. Because of greed by the rich and upper middle class, we are stuck not only with permanent class society but one in which the poor and working class suffer a lot and can never get out of suffering. The rich get absolutely richer and more powerful while the poor and working class get continually poorer and weaker by comparison.

Class differences persist no matter how rich America becomes overall. Class differences, with a long-term bottom class of suffering people, are part of the system. They are not something that can be cured simply by making America richer on the whole or on average. We have to change the system. While we try to change the system, we have to help the poor and working class, especially ethnic groups among the poor and working class such as Blacks and Hispanics, so they do not suffer. As it turns out, most of

the things that we do to help them also contribute significantly to changing the system so that all people can get good jobs with benefits, including programs such as Head Start.

How the economy is unfair makes a difference. What we do about unfairness depends on how we see the cause of unfairness and how we think the economy works. Unfortunately, Democrats do not explain how the economy works to create and sustain class society with a permanent lower class. Democrats do not explain how the economy works and is unfair so that we have ideas by which to assess ways to make it better, to assess programs. Democrats do not explain how the economy is unfair due to intrinsic economic dynamics.

Instead, Democrats rely on three arguments: (1) The economy is unfair because rich powerful people twist things to make sure they stay on top, especially at the expense of the bottom, and now even at the expense of the working and middle classes. It seems the rich and powerful want a lower class because somehow it helps them stay on top – here is not the place to explain why that might be so. Rich and powerful people twist politics to get what they want. The implication is that, if rich and powerful people did not control politics, if we Democrats controlled politics, we could untwist things, the economy would be fair, and everybody would get a good job. (2) Prejudice against ethnic, religious, national, and gender groups. In particular, Whites hate Blacks, harm Blacks, and so keep Blacks from moving up the socio-economic hierarchy. Men persistently oppress women and so keep women-centered families from moving up the hierarchy. (3) If Blacks, women, and other hated groups were to move up the hierarchy, it would not displace any Whites or men, and would not harm Whites or men in any way. Yet the working class and middle class refuse to see that the poor and the lower working class are not their enemies and instead are their natural allies.

Mike says: While there is some truth to these reasons, likely they are now not most important. Even if they were, we could not know what to do unless we also know how a real capitalist economy works. Democrats do not have a good model of how a real capitalist economy works. We need that. Without it, we cannot really help, bad conditions must recur, and conditions will get worse in the modern world economy. Without it, Democrats cannot really argue against the Republican model of the economy in which getting richer on average automatically solves all problems and causes the lower class to have good jobs and rise. Often what we do to help the poor while we try to change the system does not really change the system and so does not help the poor in the long run. Sometimes what we do actually enables the unfair system. Democrats are not changing the system because really they don't know the system.

The only model that Democrats present of a capitalist economy says that it is rich enough to make sure everybody is well off, there is no inherent bias in the economy creating unemployment and bad jobs, all the bias comes from twisting by rich and powerful people, and we can adjust the economy as much as we wish without detracting from its overall wealth and its overall ability to make everybody well off. This model as stated is simply wrong. It is wrong enough to cause ideological damage and real damage, especially to the people that Democrats wish to help.

Democrats say: If we Democrats could adjust the economy, we could make up for all its faults.

We Democrats could make sure there was no unemployment and make sure all jobs were good jobs. We could make sure everybody got a job good enough to get health benefits, have a safe retirement, but a house, but a boat, have a vacation of at least two weeks, and send all their children to college. Likely, it would take two adult wage earners to achieve this level of affluence but we could do it.

We are not allowed to adjust the economy to make up for all the faults in the economy. The biggest reason we cannot adjust the economy enough is that the Republicans and their clients, the White comfortable middle class and comfortable working class, won't let us.

If we did adjust the economy and some people still did not benefit enough, such as that they could not get a good enough job, then we could support them easily enough through benefits programs without undermining the people who do have jobs.

Because we are not allowed to adjust the economy properly, a lot of people suffer. We have to do what we can for these people in the meantime. We can do this. America is easily rich enough to help all the people who do not make it in the regular economy. We can help them up to the level of being able to find and hold a good job. We can give them health and retirement benefits. We can make sure their children are well educated no matter how many children they have. We can do this without distorting the economy very much, certainly without distorting it so much as to threaten the people who have good jobs and support the programs.

The unfairness of the economy is doubly unfair because it is not randomly spread by ethnicity, religion, gender, age, and immigration status. Unemployment and bad jobs are concentrated among Blacks, Hispanics, women, especially single mothers, old people, Black teens, Black men and young men, and immigrants. (Mike says: This point is true.)

We should focus our support on those groups that support us and that look hardest hit. Focusing on them does not put other groups at any comparative disadvantage. We do not overlook other groups even if it looks like we overlook other groups. We do not make them our helpful clients as the Right makes working class Whites their helpful clients. Focusing on them apparently does the most good. When we have saved them, then we can turn to other groups.

The people that receive support almost never cheat. If a few do cheat, the majority of people who get help benefit far more than is lost to the people who cheat, and thus most recipients contribute to society. They contribute far more than is lost through cheating. Support is always on the whole more beneficial than costly; it is always cost effective.

The people that receive support almost always use support to improve themselves and their children so they climb out of poverty and they get jobs. They don't always get great jobs but they always get jobs

that are good enough. Their children always use support to get enough quality education so that they get good enough jobs. Then all these people pay back in taxes what we gave them in support.

Support always pays for itself in the long run.

With proper support, poverty would not run in groups or in generations. The children of people who receive support would never need support themselves. With proper support, the idea that any ethnic or gender group is inherently poor or inherently receives a lot of benefits would disappear. With proper support, all groups would suffer the same rates of employment, good jobs, unemployment, and bad jobs, and all groups would have the same rate of people in them who received benefits. This is the key to ending discrimination in the medium run.

The economy is imperfect and has flaws. Still, the economy is robust enough to withstand any tinkering that we do to it. Whatever we take out in taxes will not distort the economy enough so as to add to unemployment or other problems. Whatever wealth we transfer from the upper middle class and upper class to other classes will never distort the economy so as to add to unemployment or other problems. Whatever wealth we take from the middle class, including the working class, to give to the unstable middle class, unstable working class, and the poor, will never add to unemployment or other problems. Democrats (Liberals) never hurt or shrink the economy through interference. Liberals never cause more problems, unfairness, unemployment, or bad jobs through interference.

We Democrats do not explain why an economy that is so-robust-that-it-can-handle-any-tinkering is not so productive as to give any able willing people good jobs. This is a key point but we never address it.

Whatever wealth we take from one group to give to another group never gives takers undue advantage over givers. We Democrats never redistribute so that recipients are better off in any way than donors. We never undermine donors. We move wealth around only just enough to make up for unfairness without adding more unfairness, and only just enough so recipients can use wealth to get security and training to get out of need and get out of taking. Whatever wealth we move from one group to another never adds to bad employment, unemployment, or other economic problems.

We Democrats are the guardians of fairness. Fairness is more important than overall economic success, social success, or any indicator of overall goodness. It is worth sacrificing benefits to the whole to make sure any group that cries "but that's not fair" gets a full redress of grievance. All such groups are our clients. It is worth sacrificing the benefits of other groups to make sure any client group of ours that claims unfairness gets compensated in full for its feeling of unfairness. It is worth intruding into the economy, even to worth shrinking the overall economy, to make sure that all the groups that cry "unfair" get full compensation. We do not recognize any arguments of nearly balanced unfairness. Nearly all of our client groups have some claim of unfairness that we try to redress.

Once we have put into place a program to help a client group, we never remove that program. Our support is forever. We do not end support even if the client group recovers and overcomes initial

unfairness. Of course, somehow, client groups seem never to recover well enough so we can end their support. And, if a group ever did recover, we could always find another group to take its place. The programs are self-supplying, and they always have takers. It is well to leave programs always in place so we don't have to rebuild them with every new group that we help and so we can use the programs to recruit new groups.

We are the champions of all victims. Nobody else can know about victims as we do or can help them as we do. Anybody who tries likely will make it worse.

We are the champions of underdogs. Nobody else can know about underdogs as we do or can help them as we do. Anybody who tries likely will make it worse.

By implication, all the people that we help are victims or underdogs. If you want our help, take on the role of a victim or underdog. If you take on the role of victim or underdog, we will help you.

Officially we respect the right of people to believe in the supernatural and to be religious but unofficially we consider all official religion outmoded and we disdain religion. We respect people who are aloof to religion. We accept chic un-religion and chic anti-religion. We do not respect public atheists because they are crazy in the same way religious people are crazy and because they are not popular in general. We go through outward displays of religion so we do not offend the masses.

While officially we do not favor any religion, unofficially we consider as silly (or worse) all mainstream Christians who believe in God and believe that Jesus is God. They are the clearest single representatives of silly religion and so we treat them with the most disdain. We absolutely do not trust their judgment and do not trust them to be fair. We try to make sure they do not hold positions of authority. We try to remove symbols of Western Christian heritage. Unofficially, we give better treatment to any religion other than Christianity, even if it is also theistic and theoretically suffers the same faults as traditional Christianity, even that stupid New Age and The Force. We keep some religions keep of like pets, such as Buddhism and the Dalai Lama. Of course, unofficially we disdain any religion as much as Christianity. We even disdain the religion of Native Americans but we make sure to honor it as much in public as we can because Native Americans get a lot of sympathy.

We accept as clients any group that gains general sympathy and political support such as lesbians, gays, bisexual, transgender, trans-sexual, women, and Native Americans.

Nature has taken a huge hit from people. If nature goes down far enough, it will severely hurt people. We are already close. Even if nature does not go down far enough to hurt people, the damage to nature is a great tragedy which will affect Earth and humans for thousands of years. So we are the champions of nature too. We don't understand nature. We have many wrong ideas about nature. But that doesn't matter because most people think of nature as cute and cuddly and innately good, and we can use such feelings. Whether we really help nature much does not matter as much as using good feelings toward nature to bolster political support.

People are smart enough to see that Liberals give them the best chance but they are not smart enough to deal with all the confusion of the economy and not smart enough to deal with all the traps laid for them by clever capitalists, politicians, and advertising agencies. Liberals have to offer institutional support in the form of state agencies to protect consumers and to control capitalists and politicians. If we do not have this big protection, capitalists and Right Wing politicians will consolidate their hold on power and freeze the inequality of the economy. Without such consumer protection, there is no way out of inequality.

Republicans have interfered in helping institutions deliberately to make those institutions hard to figure out, hard to navigate, and hard to get benefits from. This is their way of undoing all the good we try to do and their way of attacking our clients so as to benefit their clients. So although people are smart, they can't deal with this Republican crap evil either and we have to help them. Working people and other people who have not had the benefit of a long education filling out forms are especially vulnerable to Republican obfuscation and especially need our help. (Mike agrees with all this.)

Officially we believe that people are autonomous and the best judges of their self-interest. Protection that we give to consumers does not go against this general assessment. Some of us privately think that a lot of poor, working, and even middle class people are stupid, but that does not change our general opinion that people are usually their own best judges.

We inherited the Liberal idea that people should be free to do as they will as long as they do not harm others or the general public. We go along with that idea with some exceptions. We go along with the idea even though we think a lot of what people do is yucky. We link the idea of doing as you will to the idea of privacy, and use both ideas to defend individual choices such as abortion.

All victims and underdogs are all good while all oppressors are all bad.

Men of all races, religions, and ages victimize all women. There are no good men. All women are good. White men oppress all women and all ethnicities other than White. White women oppress all men and all women of all non-White religions. There are no good White women. All Christians oppress all non-Christians. There are no good Christians. All non-Christians are good. Black men oppress all Black women and all other women over whom they can assert physical power or other power. There are no good Black men. All Black women are good. All Hispanic men oppress all Hispanic women and all other women over whom they can exert power. Compared to Hispanic women, there are no good Hispanic men and no bad Hispanic women. All Native American men oppress all Native American women and oppress all other women over whom they can exert any power. Compared to Native American women, there are no good Native American men and no bad Native American women. The same is true for other ethnic groups and for many religious groups.

All distress by any non-White person is entirely due to discrimination and oppression by Whites, both White men and White women. Even when distress appears due to economy, society, or legal system,

White people manipulate those to their advantage, and prevent non-White's from access to them, so distress is also due entirely to Whites. Distress can be removed only by legally preventing all Whites from exerting any power of any kind over non-Whites.

Non-Whites must always be protected from Whites. Distress must be redressed legally in perpetuity. Non-Whites are never free from White oppression. There never comes a time when non-Whites have attained enough self-determination to deal with White affliction. Affirmative Action must be kept forever no matter if it seems not to work.

Distress by non-Whites is never due to them. It is never due to their culture, society, attitude, acts, non-acts, personal will, cultural will, abuse of substances, lack of education, willful lack of education, lack of respect for books and education, lack of appreciation for science, gangsters, or any indicator of likely distress or of lack of success. Any apparent lack of readiness to use education or opportunities, such as repeated abuse of alcohol, or violence against spouse or children, is due entirely to disadvantage from the economy and society, and so is due entirely to Whites. Non-Whites never bear any responsibility of any kind or degree for their own distress. Non-Whites never have to consider changing any of their culture, society, family life, or attitudes.

The police always victimize non-Whites even while the police always help Whites. Non-Whites are never to blame in any altercation with the police. The police are always to blame. Even non-White officers victimize non-Whites, even Black police terrorize Blacks, because all police are simply tools of the White power system and all police, even non-White officers, internalize their role as tools of the White power system. Non-Whites are always better off without any police. Non-Whites are correct to strike back against all police.

While these statements about relations are a little overkill, they are better than the opposite, which is to "whitewash" everything and do nothing.

Questions and Answers with a Democrat.

M = Mike; D = Democrat.

M: Liberals started by wanting personal acts and social institutions to make sense, both practically and morally. Liberals got a huge boost from the work of Adam Smith on markets and Jeremy Bentham on cost-benefit. Yet Democrats resist efforts to assess programs and institutions according to cost-benefit practicality. If the programs are supposed to help, isn't it reasonable to ask if they really do? If they aren't worth the money, then aren't you just keeping the programs alive as a way to hold clients?

D: We don't oppose all practical assessment. A lot of practical assessment backs us up, for example school lunch for kids and Head Start. They make a difference, a difference that likely is worth far more than the cost. Republicans want to kill those programs as much as they want to kill any program that might really help the poor. Usually cost-benefit assessment of programs is not conclusive. What we

really need to think about is not whether we can juggle the books to make a program look practical or impractical but what would happen if we didn't have the program. Often the cost of not having a program is greater than the cost of having a program but that rarely gets assessed by Republican bean counters. Republicans propose a lot of programs that would not stand the cost-benefit practicality test, and the programs really should be assessed that way, such as tax breaks, but nobody claims they are impractical or illogical. Allowing logging of the last old growth forest is not cost effective yet nobody says that. Many military programs are not practical even in military terms but nobody cuts a military program. Heavy police protection for middle class and upper middle class neighborhoods likely is not cost effective. Heavy police protection for working class and poor areas might be cost effective but nobody does that. Nobody applies cost-effective practicality to the so-called war on drugs. If you want to play the game of practicality and cost-benefit then it should apply across the board with the same standards for all programs. We would like that game.

Yes, our programs do lead the poor and some of the working class, especially non-Whites, to look to us for help, but so what? That is not what the programs are for. The programs give real help to whomever needs the help, and it is only human nature that those who get help look well at people who give help. Again, Republicans do the same with their programs and their clients. Do you think business would give to Republicans if business didn't expect at least as much in return?

M: Liberals started by not appealing primarily to emotion. Yet your programs, the way you pitch your programs, the people that you try to help, and how people come to support the programs, rely mostly on emotion. You don't sell by saying they are cost effective but by showing how the poor suffer and by stating that helping the poor is a moral imperative that outweighs other considerations.

D: There is moral making sense and practical making sense. Republicans sell a lot of their programs also by making moral appeals, often to cover up bad practicality and immoral pandering to clients. They use different moral rules and they appeal to different people but it is the same kind of sell. OK. I know you don't want me to justify what we do by saying "Republicans do the same thing, so turnabout is fair play, and we can lower ourselves to their level". So, I'll make it clearer. When we can make sure that one less kid goes to bed hungry at night or has food for lunch at school, then that is a small practical price to pay for a lot of moral good. There really is a moral good. If you don't see this case, then you don't see morality of any kind very well. This is not "bleeding heart"; this is basic morality, rooted in all the big religions. Yeah, the parents of the kids sometimes are no good. Yeah, sometimes by helping the kids we enable parents in a bad lifestyle. Yeah, the parents know we are suckers for kids who need help and so use us. But what are you going to do? That kid is still there and that kid is still hungry. That is basic morality. Jesus said "feed my lambs", so it doesn't get clearer than that. A lot of our programs you can see as variations on this kind of simple moral imperative. When all the forests and land are gone 500 years from now, you think people then will think about the practicality of not cutting now? You think they will say, "Well, by cutting that last 10,000 acres they saved one job for a while." No, they will think about our huge moral failing by not saving some of the forests and biodiversity for them. When a woman comes to a hospital beat up, do you grill her about her choice in men before you treat her, and then not treat her if she has bad choice in men?

Republicans ought to be glad we can muster emotional moral appeal to help the poor and poor working class because, if we didn't, if we let them starve, the whole system would blow up and the Republicans wouldn't have their privileges either.

M: Just because Republicans do it does not mean you should do it and just because you do it does not mean Republicans should do it. Turnabout is not really fair play when public good and greater morality is at stake. But I don't want to dwell on that.

Doesn't it make sense to try to direct help to people who are likely to actually use it to make their lives better and the lives of their kids better? And aren't those people more likely to be what we call good moral people with good family values? If we only have limited resources, why don't we direct what we have toward those people? Why give it to just anybody, especially if you know a lot of those people are bad. Maybe we have to tolerate a few sick and hungry kids to make sure that the total of sick and hungry kids eventually goes down rather than stays the same decades.

D: I grant you the point about turnabout on an idealized schoolyard but in real politics turnabout does become fair play. Turnabout is part of the political game, and, since you want to talk about real life and not just idealistic morals, you have to accept that. Still, I see your point and will not to use that excuse too often.

Do you have a test for moral purity? Do you want other people to demand of you that you have a pure moral soul before you ever get help and before your children get help? Could you have made it through your youth that way? In the Bible, it says we should not punish the entire family for the crimes of one person in the family. So why punish children for the crimes of the parents? Yes, I personally would like to tell bad parents to go jump in the river in January and die, but I can't do that, and they wouldn't do it anyway. I know we have only a limited amount, and I would like to direct that limited amount where it does most good. If that means giving it only to the moral children of moral parents, only to "Leave it to Beaver" families a bit down on their luck, Black, White, or Brown, and we knew they would get back on their feet, then maybe that is what we should do. But we can't fine tune it that way. If we start giving help, then we end up giving help to what you might call "bad" families; and, by helping bad families, we don't help the good families as much. The squeaky wheel gets the grease. Still, what else can we do? Besides, the courts have made it clear that we can't use moral tests or family structure tests to aim aid, so we muster as much aid as we can and give it as best we can. To do that, and to keep people wishing to help even when they see the "bad" families, we use emotional appeal. Too bad.

M: The modern welfare system was pretty much going by the early 1950s. Many other programs were going by the early 1970s. We've had 60 years of this crap. We've spent trillions of dollars. Yet almost nothing has changed. In fact, at least since the middle 1980s, probably since the middle 1970s, it has gotten a lot worse. Every time there is a program, it balloons up to triple what was projected. A huge chunk of Americans don't pay taxes. What had been accomplished? When is the end? If programs were going to change people, and then people would get off the rolls permanently, don't you think this

would have happened by now? Maybe you are right about morality in one way but not in the bleeding heart way. Maybe this really is a moral and character problem. Maybe there just are a lot of people who are basically selfish. Maybe the programs really do tempt people into selfishness when, without the programs, those same people would move around and look for a job.

D: On big reason it hasn't gotten permanently better is because programs have never been carried out to the point where it would get permanently better. If programs had been done right in the first place, then they would have worked and there would be no ballooning. But Republicans kept the programs below the level where they would do permanent good. Instead, the programs were kept at the level where they were big band aids. That is why they ballooned up. People got on the programs but never got all the help they needed to get off, and so people got on and stayed on, and more people got on and stayed on. The ballooning is not a problem with the programs or with morality and character but with how the programs were funded and targeted, that is, with Republicans. If ever we could do enough programs right enough for a couple of generations, then the programs likely would cause a permanent change. We would spend a lot less money in the long run if we did it right in the short run. It is like the wars in Vietnam, Afghanistan, and Iraq. But, if we are not allowed to do that, then we have to run what they give us as best we can.

M: You have a really good view of character to think people would use programs that way. They would take the right kind of help, get to a high enough level, and then get off.

D: A lot of people actually do that. What do you want to do if that is not the case? Do you want to end the programs and end help to all the children? We can't do that and I don't think you can do that either.

M: Maybe we have to end the programs. 60 years, trillions of dollars, and so little real change. Maybe we have to bite the bullet for a while and let kids get hurt so people will get reality and know how tough things are in the modern world. Maybe then, if they got the programs back, they would act with the kind of character you think they have.

D: That sounds too Republican for me. That is too hard, too cruel. Even they don't really want to do that. They just say that for glitz and so they can sound like moral tough guys. If ever they did that and people could put the blame on them, no Republican would be elected for 50 years.

M: Switch topics. These are the kind of morals that appeal to the working class and the middle class. They don't like to see kids suffer. Then why did you lose them to the Republicans? Why can't you get them back, especially now that things have gotten so tough since about 1985? Why do they insist that the failure of programs is a failure of morality and character? Why do they think that "get tough with the selfish freeloaders" is what to do and it will solve problems? Do you really think you can get good jobs for everybody, including all the unhappy Whites and all the others?

D: We lost most of the "unhappy Whites" back in the early 1970s. I don't have to explain why other people have wrong ideas and why they have any particular wrong ideas. Still, if we want them back, we

have to think how they think and have to get them to move from that position to a better position. They still can swing elections – although that power likely will go over to Hispanics and young people soon – so, if we want to win, we better get back some unhappy Whites. I am not sure they think Blacks, Hispanics, immigrants, and “morally bad freeloaders”, really cause all their problems, especially now since “outsourcing” and the loss of manufacturing jobs should make clear that worldwide competition plays a big role. They want to hang on to what they’ve got or to what they imagine they used to have. They want for their children not to go backwards. America might not have as many good jobs as it did before but it still has some good jobs, and they want to get those good jobs first. To get those jobs first, they have to make sure Blacks and Hispanics can’t compete. For that, they have to make sure there are no programs or the programs don’t work. If you want to hit other people, you paint them as crappy morally bad. Unhappy Whites are not the only ones to do this. The Black view of Whites is really racist, at least as bad as the White view of Blacks, and that won’t change much either. We lost the unhappy Whites when they thought we would make sure Blacks got good jobs before their own kids did. We kept them lost when they thought we would make sure single moms and Hispanics would get good jobs before the kids of hard working Whites. We kept them lost when our programs paid for the medical, education, housing, and transportation costs of some Blacks, Hispanics, single moms, and immigrants when the costs of all those things began rising faster than their wages in the 1980s. We kept them lost when we could not convince them that we could get good jobs for every person and every group in America.

We could try to get them back by telling them that Republicans are more to blame for the loss of good jobs and the rise in costs faster than wages, and they do believe that, but they don’t think we can do much about it and they do think Republicans can, and will, even if Republicans caused it and still don’t do anything about it. Go figure. We could try to convince them that we can lower costs so wages can catch up but they don’t believe us. We could try to convince them that we can make jobs for everyone but they don’t believe us about that either. We can offer them programs that take the heat off rising costs, such as Bernie Sanders’ plan to give everyone a “free” college education. But they don’t believe us, and, even if we did give everyone a free college education, it would still not lead to good jobs for everyone – they know that much.

We could try to convince them that a universal health care program will save money and so will drive down costs for everyone in the long run but they don’t believe that either. After all their experience with social programs, they see any kind of health insurance as a scheme to get hard working Whites to pay for Blacks, Hispanics, single mothers, and people who won’t take care of their own health. Sure you can help some people such as kids who get cancer but how much do you have to pay to give that little help when a lot of the money goes for people who smoke, drink too much, and eat too much? It is better to try to make the Republicans give them jobs with benefits.

M: So there isn’t much you can do. What you said was pretty straight with me. If you say that out loud you will get thrown out of the Party and the unhappy Whites will never vote Democrat again even if all the bad stuff you said about Republicans is proven true.

D: Yeah, I better be careful. We are in a race. Soon, Hispanics will be more important for swinging elections our way than Blacks. Soon, if we can get them, young people will be more important than Blacks and maybe more than Hispanics. We have to offer programs that appeal to Hispanics and young people. Obama had that in 2008 but lost it in 2012 and the Party could not convince young people that we would carry on the vision of 2008. This is where it helps to be the party of the “little guy” and the outsider because we already have the rep of being for gay rights, legalizing pot, and helping the Earth. Young people, and some Hispanics, know that, if we can take care of the Earth, and we have programs that work for everyone such as health care and free education, not just programs that help some people such as welfare, then we can find enough half-way decent jobs for most people. We can make America so young people get jobs good enough to live on and pay phone bills. We can make it so women get equal pay for comparable work and don’t get harassed. We can make it so you can have an openly gay friend and so gay people don’t have to be ashamed. That is enough for many modern young people. Republicans can’t, or really won’t, give them any of that. We have to get Hispanics and young people on our side before the Party disappears totally and something new emerges that will get these people on its side. Sanders-like socialism won’t do it. We have to figure out what will.

M: Have you given up on the unhappy Whites?

D: No but we really don’t know what to do so I guess you were right when you said before that we did not know what to do. Hopefully, when unhappy Whites see it all working out in a few big places such as the West Coast states, they will come around. This new world might be the best shot for their kids since they really can’t go back to the 1950s again. There will be programs and stuff they still won’t like, but we can shift our emphasis on to what they do like.

M: You know there will still be a lot of unemployment and bad jobs. You know that these won’t fall on every group equally. Some groups will get harder than others. Is this going to be Blacks again or are badly educated Whites the new fall guys?

D: We don’t know. We have the programs in place to help the people who can’t find jobs and can’t find decent jobs. We have to find voters who will help us with the big picture. Maybe Blacks sense that things might move backwards and that is why they were not enthusiastic about Hilary or Bernie. I hope we don’t fall back on a scapegoat group and we don’t fall back on making that scapegoat group Blacks or poorly educated Whites or Hispanics or anybody. For sure, under any Republican agenda, that is what would happen because that is what is happening. So we are still the better choice.

M: What if the average productivity of the American worker won’t support a country where the large majority of people get a decent job, one that pays for food, rent, the smart phone bill, and a decent education for the kids. What if no mass of workers in the world really can make that much because no large mass of workers is that productive? When we see people in China who do make that much, they don’t represent most of the people. Most of the people are crammed into small apartments just like most of the people in Latin America and India.

D: You have been reading too much economics. Figuring out the productivity of the average American worker and what that will be able to buy is pretty airy-fairy. Maybe the average worker in China won't be able to afford a decent apartment in Montgomery, Alabama, USA but the average American working family will. America is blessed with resources, education, ability, technology, and attitude. Those will keep us productive enough to make almost everybody feel good enough as long as we work together. We really believe that. We have to be able to explain it to enough Whites, Blacks, Hispanics, women, gay people, and young people so they get it and help.

M: Liberals started out believing in the dignity of people, the ability of people to choose, the hope that people would seek freedom, and the big hope that people would not debase themselves, especially by making themselves dependent on rulers. Yet the net result of all these programs is that people don't choose, aren't free, don't seek freedom, and seek to be the clients of masters. Something like 30% of all Americans don't pay federal taxes or state income taxes because, essentially, they claim dependence on the federal government. You replaced the old overlords with new overlords, you. At least old overlords were honest. By pretending this dependency is not so, you make it all worse. Assume the worst: if the state does not take care of out-of-work people, people with bad jobs, and poor people, then other low income and poor people have to care for them. As a result, a lot of these people will be trapped in poverty. At some point, isn't this better than making a huge class of unhappy, willfully ignorant, and malcontent slaves? If you just kept the programs that let the children eat and get a decent education, and got rid of the rest, wouldn't that be better, more in line with the original Liberal view of humans and original Liberal goals?

D: "A huge class of unhappy, willfully ignorant, and malcontent slaves"? We are the new overlords? Where does that come from? Even though 30%, maybe more, of people don't pay federal taxes and state income taxes, they do pay sales tax, and that can be a lot when all you have is money for food and rent. Do you really think that we could not help out the parents and still make sure the kids get fed and get a decent education? What makes you think these people are unhappy, willfully ignorant, and cause trouble, or are slaves? Just because people get help from the state sometimes doesn't make them any of those. Yeah, Democrats feel good when we do some good and maybe some Democrats even feel happy when people show gratitude, Jesus felt happy at gratitude, and we are happy when they vote Democratic, but that does not make us creepy new overlords. I don't see how giving families a chance takes away dignity and makes them sub-human. Making poor people take care of other poor people, living twenty to a house, in a ghetto, seems to do that even more.

M: Have you checked out the condition of schools in bad districts lately? Have you noticed that a lot of graduates from those schools can't read or write let alone compete for a tech job? Have you seen the crime rate, especially violent crime, among Black men and some poor Whites? Have you noticed Blacks now murder cops of all races? I can't abide murdering cops. Have you listened to so-called "classic" rap and hip-hop from the 1990s and up through now? Have you heard cars blast mind-killing soul-killing sound and noticed that the sound is not a representative sample of good ethnic musical creativity but is about abuse of women and killing "them"? That does not sound like free people who value freedom and value the great chances they get on welfare and Social Security Disability. Yes, I do think you could

feed kids and give kids a chance at an education even if you did not give their parents a lot of money. Maybe the kids would have to live at the schools but I can get along with that. I want to keep what good that we can out of the programs. If you can make the programs work but not make them balloon up, and make people into bitter dependants, and not make yourselves into the new overlords, then I would be delighted.

You just really don't see it do you? You don't see how much you take away from people when you make them dependent. You don't see how much you and the state act like new masters. I don't want to go into this topic much because we just won't get along, and I want to ask other questions.

D: Do you mean that the bad attitude, violence, and anger are our fault? Do you mean it is our fault that Black people kill police officers? No way. No roundabout logic can make that our fault. We don't condone that. We condemn that. We don't make any excuses for that. We have never condoned the bad attitude that gets in the way of progress. We have always gone out of our way to condemn Black-on-Black violence and all violence. We are the ones who set up shelters to protect women. That kind of bad attitude and violence far predates our ideas and programs. That bad stuff is obvious since people started keeping statistics. Even if programs had some effect on that kind of bad attitude and violence, they didn't cause it. We wish we could pinpoint not only the causes of bad attitude and violence but also the guaranteed cure. We know neighborhood rallies and marches don't do anything. We know that bigger deeper changes are needed. But do you really think our programs get in the way of bigger deeper changes or somehow cover up the need for bigger deeper changes? No.

If you want to look for the reasons for bad attitude and violence, look to decades and decades of being on the bottom of the socio-economic scale, for Blacks, Hispanics, and some Whites; of watching others succeed when you knew you has as much native talent; and watching the bad effects on the lives of your children and their children and their children. That dark drama pisses off people in a way that does not go away in a few years, and that can get vicious.

If you could tell us exactly what changes need doing without falling into racism and without blaming us for racism as the patronizing new overlords, then we would be happy to help. I doubt we have to get rid of the programs to do what needs to be done.

M: I will get at this issue another way but first I comment. I am glad you said your ideas and programs are not to blame and that a deeper bigger attitude is to blame. You said that as a way to divert blame away from any bad ideas you might have promoted, but that's OK, I go along with the need for deeper changes. Ultimately, the changes can come only from within a group. The changes would amount to a sea-change in the attitudes of many Blacks, and some Hispanics and Whites. I doubt that Liberal ideas and programs can ever succeed without the big deep changes in attitude. You need to get at the basic attitudes beforehand, or at the same time. Yes, some of the attitude comes for decades of being on the bottom and getting mistreated but not all of it. Some if it is just bad attitude. In any case, all of it has to change. A change in attitude is as important as the programs. While in theory the programs might not block the change in attitude or might help it, in fact, instead of changing their attitude and better using

the programs, people keep the same old bad attitude and just wait for the handout. That is bad. So, I do blame the programs for getting in the way of a good change in attitude. Is it worth getting rid of the programs, and so enduring damage, to MAYBE change the attitude, and so MAYBE get some good that way? I don't know. I've thought about it. I am sure you haven't.

So, what do Liberals do to make it change rather than enable it? How do Liberals and the client groups, like Blacks, cooperate to change the deep big attitude? You don't have to answer.

M: Now here is the long continuing comment. This business about not changing attitude and instead blaming the police, blaming somebody else, and making the attitude all around worse, is what original Conservatives had in mind when they said that bad ideas often come from supposedly good ideas. You have to be careful at every step that your supposedly good ideas do not give rise to bad attitude-and-ideas or create bad attitude-and-ideas. You just are not aware of some of the bad effects.

The whole relation is like Right Wing Christians and their attitude toward Jews. You know that right? You can see on TV how Right Wing Christians say they want to help oppressed Jews, and they show all the pictures of old Jews in Russia and hungry Jews in Africa. But you know that Rightist Christians don't care about Jews. They just want Jews back in Israel, want Jews to rebuild the Temple, and want animal sacrifices again, so Armageddon will begin and Jesus returns. Rightist Christians claim to help Jews but really they are using Jews and they don't care if Jews get annihilated. As for the Jews, they know that the Rightist Christians don't like them, and they don't like the Rightist Christians, but the Jews are happy to take the aid, even from people who dislike them. You have to see that as creepy, and you have to be suspicious not only of Rightist Christians who use Jews like that but of all Christians, or at least all those Christian who don't speak out. And you can't feel proud about Jews here either.

Your relation to your client groups is like that. It is kind of creepy, and it makes the whole Liberal side feel creepy. It makes all your arguments about programs feel creepy.

You want to help the poor, right? Do you know two things that hurt the poor badly? Those are any sales tax that does not exempt food, medicine, shelter, and clothing, and inflation that comes of deficit spending. Yet you not only tolerate those, you encourage deficit spending so you can continue all the entitlement programs so you can get votes. Sure, stopping the deficit and paying back what we owe would hurt poor people in the short run but it would help them a lot more in the long run, yet you don't do it. A sane person can only conclude you would rather use the poor in the short run than help them in the long run.

A lot of your client groups are pretty religious. And they hold the Rightist religion that Liberals officially dislike. A lot of Blacks oppose non-traditional gender roles of all kinds, including disliking all the LGBTQ people. They condemn abortion. They also condemn premarital sex but many of their girls get pregnant as teens. They extol the idealized family with a resident father but many of the families are led by single moms, or the kids are dumped on grandma. Hispanics also dislike non-traditional gender roles, hate abortion, and, until recently, hated birth control. I used to drive a clinic van for Planned Parenthood,

and we used to call in the police to protect us from crazy Hispanic husbands and boyfriends. These people, Black, Hispanic, and working class White, go to church every Sunday. These people don't like the Dalai Lama, Buddhism, Hinduism, and especially Islam. These people think non-religious Liberals are one step away from Satan. Yet these are the people you support in the name of Liberty about social relations. You should support the poor regardless of their beliefs and regardless of their stupidity but this is a gap that Liberals need to address. If these people say one thing but do another, then how can you believe they will change their attitudes and find a place in society if you give them programs? Yet Liberals don't address the gap in the thinking of clients or in their own thinking. They don't address the gap not out of respect for religious freedom or gender identity but because they don't want to lose their client groups. Client groups cling to rich non-religious Liberals because they want the dole. This is how supposedly good ideas eventually support truly bad ideas and attitudes.

Blacks and Hispanics generally don't like homosexuals but Democrats support homosexuals and benefit greatly from the gay vote and from modern young people who accept gays. Blacks and Hispanics don't like abortion but Democrats support abortion and support the right of women to control their bodies, and Liberals benefit from the support of women – at least when the candidate is not Hilary Clinton. Recall how, at first, President Obama was against abortion and weak on gay rights but changed his mind. Can't you see that supporting Blacks, Hispanics, gays, pro-choice, and pro-choice women, all at once, is creepy? The only possible explanation is that you seek client groups and the client groups go along with it and keep their mouths shut at the right times. Is that the human integrity that Liberals supported?

Most Democratic politicians go to church not because they really believe or want to base their acts indirectly on what their church teaches but because it looks good. They are worse than Ben Franklin at his worst. This is the crappy attitude that too many Rightist Christians have toward their church and their religion. At least Rightist Christians have the cleverness to shop for a Church that supports their political opinions and then claim their political opinions stem from the teachings of that Church. Rightist Christian bad hypocrisy is what makes young Liberals dislike them and reject formal religion. Yet Liberals do it too, and it makes young people feel just as uneasy. What are Liberal ideas and acts really based on?

Some Democrats are genuinely religious. There should be a connection between their basic beliefs, their religion, and what they do as Liberals, even if the connection is not rigid as with Rightist Christians and doctrinaire Muslims. In theory there is nothing wrong with being religious but no religious Liberals ever talk about the relation between beliefs and their political stance. Is it so wrong and dangerous to see a connection? Would it be so wrong to be as clear and honest as Jefferson or Franklin? Why are you ashamed of any religious framework? Why can't you think out the relations between your religion, your deep beliefs, and your political acts? If you can't think out relations between your religion, deep beliefs, and political acts in a way that makes sense and that does not put off young voters then how can you call yourself a Liberal and why do you deserve to keep office? The tenets of any established religion, or even your own stated code of religion, don't have to determine your political acts but it would be nice if there was some kind of reasonable connection. Do you keep your mouth shut to make sure you get votes? Then how can you really be religious either?

Do you get some of it now? Is all that creepy enough for you? Liberals could sort out all of this but they won't. They prefer to kiss up to clients and hope Republicans screw up enough so Democrats stay ahead in the client group race.

Nice Words for Liberals and Conservatives.

I want to say something nice about Liberals besides that I started out as a Liberal and still prefer old style Liberalism. With a little interpretation, these words apply to Conservatives too.

The programs of the 1950s through early 1970s were launched by well-intended good-hearted people. If you lived then, likely you would have supported them. The programs were based on a good view of humans as responsible, capable, and not cheaters. When programs did not work as they should have, Democrats did try to change them, and they cooperated with Republicans to do so. Democrats could not let go of programs because to do so would mean not only to deprive cheaters and lazy people but to punish and doom innocent children. Democrats have always been prone to blackmail through children, and that is not usually a bad thing. Good people of the time felt the programs were needed and would be useful. You should consider why good hearted people not so different from you felt way, why much of what they saw is still true, and what really to do about it apart from partisan rant.

Only quite late in life could I accept that we can't save everybody. Somewhere in the back of the mind of every good Liberal, not all Liberals, is the idea that we can save everybody if only we try hard enough and we have enough time. Somewhere in the back of our minds is the idea that God wants us to try to save everybody. That is hard to let go all-the-way although nearly all of us learn to let go of it enough to get along in normal life.

One reason I took so long to stop trying to save everybody is that, to not save some people, means not only to abandon them but to abandon their children and likely to abandon their ethnic, age, religious, national, or gender group too. It is really hard to abandon some Black people or "White Trash" without abandoning their children and abandoning all Blacks and all "White Trash". Usually, you have to hate them at least a little; and that makes you worse than them. It took me a long time to learn that I can let go of some people, even many people in a group, without necessarily condemning all the people in the group, the group, its ideals, or some of its culture. It is not easy but it can be done.

When we really feel that we can't save some people, we get angry at ourselves. To live with the anger at ourselves, we turn it against them. To turn it against them, we blame them and turn anger to disgust and hate. I don't have to tell you to look into yourself to assess how much you do this in your attitude toward Democrats or Republicans, and to stop.

Another reason it took me so long is that I had to let go not only of people in a group but sometimes, in effect, let go of the group. I wrongly believed all natural human groups must somehow be all good, or vastly better than worse, even if they had some bad apples. Why would God make groups with a big

streak of a bad attitude? Maybe God would let some people go bad but how could he let a big streak of badness run through a whole group? This attitude toward groups is the group level "Prime Directive" of not to judge ("lest ye be judged"). Indulging this judgment against a group is what leads to prejudice, war in the Middle East, and genocide. Many people feel guilty about judging although many people now dismiss it as too much Liberal political correctness. If a lot of Blacks share a particular bad attitude, this situation couldn't possibly mean Black culture really has a bad attitude and should change. Rather, this situation must mean I don't see Black culture well enough and I don't have a big heart. The same is true of White Trash, Hispanics, Eastern Liberals, and White Southern so-called Conservatives.

As it turns out, some groups do have typical persistent bad attitudes and bad acts that should change. A lot of people in some groups share bad attitudes, bad enough so they should change. Recognizing this fact is how Blacks got Whites to change some aspects of racism and using the possibility of a bad group attitude is how Blacks still attack racism. Blacks said Whites as a group shared racist attitudes, not just that some Whites were racists; and so Whites as a group should change. This charge is how women attack sexism and attack the faults of a sexist system such as low pay and sexual coercion, which they blame on the persistent bad attitudes of men in general. Without being able to accuse a whole group, we would not have some important social changes. But not only White men have bad attitudes that typify a group. Blacks, women, Black women, Hispanics, and gay people do too.

Now I am like Yossarian in "Catch-22" when he insisted it is not mostly him, it really is mostly them. It is not only me. Likely they are flawed and I am not, at least not this way. That is alright. You don't have to excuse everything just because to "call it" means calling a whole group. Just because some groups really do have bad attitudes does not mean my old wish to save people is out of kilter or that I am doomed to failure not because of flawed human group nature but because of flawed me.

A lot of people in a group can share flaws of the group but still be good in other ways. I hope the bad attitudes don't overcome the other good ways. Unfortunately, too often the bad takes over, as when Blacks kill police officers, Blacks blame everything on Whites, groups learn how to use charges of racism to get an advantage, or straight people beat up gays.

A lot of people in a group can still be good people in other ways but still the shared bad attitude is so bad that we have to protect ourselves from them and have to protect state programs from them. That means we have to protect ourselves and state programs from groups. I think that threat is what scared me most and what kept me from accepting that some groups have persistent typical bad attitudes. But the fact that some groups have bad flaws does not really mean much about trying to help some people and even about programs. We can still wish for good programs. We can still try to get good programs but we have to protect against the bad people, bad attitudes, and bad groups. We have to write laws against bad attitudes, sometimes knowing the laws affect some groups more than others. We can and should write such laws. That is what women want when they call for legal protection. But we should never write laws against groups as such. We can write laws against sexual coercion or unfair pay but not against men. We can write laws against reverse racism but not against Blacks as such.

We also must protect against racism and other bad forms of prejudice as when we blame all Muslims for a very few terrorists.