

Open LETTER:

July 1994

On The Chopping Block

Michael Embart
Post Office Box 80985
Lansing Michigan 48908



US Repres
1708 Lo
Wash:

Smith
Building

Date: June 1994

My Stance On This Issue Is:
The proposal to allow for a special session of federal spending cuts and deficit reduction is being held up by House speaker Foley. The only hope in seeing these broad spending cuts is the signatures of 218 House members on a "discharge petition" to bypass the leadership and bring the matter directly to the Representatives.

Subject: HR 406/HB 3266
"A to Z Spending Cuts"

I believe these spending cuts are movement in the right direction, and I think the success of this petition is important to the realizing of these goals.

As A Concerned citizen I Urge You To:
Sign the discharge petition if you have not already, and when the spending cuts come up for a vote, please chop, chop, chop!

"It's time for
free and fair
debate... time
for real votes
on real spend-
ing cuts."

:Rep Bill Zeliff

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Role Playing:

I am of the opinion that there are two questions which, once answered by any person, can be used as accurate predictors of how that person will answer any other question posed to him or her. The first of these queries is the seemingly all-encompassing "ultimate" question: **Is There A God?** The second is almost equally ageless and limitless: **What Is The Proper Role Of Government?**

Most people would contend that the first question is the more important of the two because it concerns itself with eternity, not merely with experiences in the here-and-now. While I acknowledge some truth in that, I would agree that it is actually the latter question that is of greater consequence to the human race. A minor, preliminary reason for my assertion is the fact that any answer to the first question can only be mere conjecture until a person is dead and it is too late to make use of the knowledge.

A primary reason for considering the second question to be the more important is the fact that it does not really matter if an individual "believes" in God or not. The question has a definitive answer, and that answer is unaffected by any personal opinion on the matter. If God does exist, He does so if people believe in Him, and he does so if people do not. If God does not exist, no amount of faith or wishful thinking will make Him come to be. The correct answer to this first question is independent of any answer an individual may give, but, in contrast, the question of government has no such set answer. The way that the majority answers that question at any given time is the way it is answered, and that is an important difference.

However, the most compelling reason to support my claim that the second question is the more crucial is the fact that it is entirely possible for two people who answer the first question differently to peacefully coexist without causing one another any harm or discomfort. Although it is

true that many wars have been fought in the name of religion, and much damage has been done in the name of the Lord, this does not necessarily have to be so. With tolerance, Catholics and Protestants, Jews and Gentiles, Buddhists and Muslims and Atheists can share the planet, can share nationalities, and can live amongst each other as neighbors or as spouses. There is no reason why differences of opinion should cause friction in the way people live their lives, so long as all people allow all others the freedom to worship, or to not worship, as they individually choose.

Disagreements on the proper role of government, however, are not so easily resolved. If one person believes that money should be taken from another's paycheck and filtered through the government to a third person whose does not work for a paycheck, and the second does not agree this is proper, there exists a clash of action, not merely of thought. If one thinks that the government needs to regulate the interaction between industry and the environment, and another does not agree, how do they settle their differences? They hold elections, and whomever has 51% of the population agreeing with them is able to force that opinion on the whole. Any matter that involves government is not "Live And Let Live," as religion can be. It is "Do As We Say."

And that is why determining the proper role of government is more important than determining the existence of God. A belief in the hereafter does not necessarily affect what transpires in this world, but a belief in what the government should do does have a profound effect on what happens in the here-and-now. A belief in the Lord may change what goes on in one person's mind, but the rule of any political ideology is guaranteed to change many aspects of what goes on in all peoples lives.

The questions of God and government are similar because the wondering about the existence of God has as many answers as there are answerers, and, similarly, the determination of the people role of government is equally as individual. Any two people who are questioned will have their own views of the Lord, and

their own views of the Law. Because of this, and because the answer to this second question has such a profound effect on human affairs, it is important for each person to find his or her own answer to this question, and then to compare and arrive at a consensus answer. This most important question is one that we need to ask of each elected official, of each candidate for public office, and, most important, that we each need to ask of ourselves.

:Michael Embart, 0594.

"The Lord is a
question of
thought.
The Law is a
question of
action."

Interested Reader

I recently received a note from an anonymous reader agreeing with the stance that was printed in the April "Open LETTER" against the workplace smoking legislation proposed by Rep. Mary Brown. Following are some of her comments:

"I smoke, and have for a long time. No one has ever held a gun to my head and forced me to smoke. I do it because I want to. Every time the government decides they need more money, they stick it to us smokers by raising the cigarette tax. They used to get some money by increasing the tax on alcohol, but they did such a good job of getting rid of drinking that now they've decided to get rid of cigarettes. What are they going to try to get rid of next, our children, our dogs, cats, what?"

"I realize certain things are offensive to other people, but how long will it be before someone you work with thinks you're wearing the wrong perfume or aftershave and they try to ban those from everywhere too?"

(Shhh... Don't suggest that so loud today, or you may see it proposed as a law tomorrow!)

YOUR OPINIONS

Restricting guns too much

In 1928 and 1938 the German government passed laws banning the production and sale of certain types of firearms, and restricting their ownership by private individuals. From 1933 to 1945 the German government murdered 13 million of its own citizens in concentration camps. What would have happened if every Jew had a gun? Do you think the outcome would have been different?

In 1993 and 1994 the government passed laws banning the production and sale of certain types of firearms, and restricting their ownership by private individuals. What do you think the outcome will be? Is anyone else worried?

MICHAEL EMHART,
Lansing

READERS REACT

USA WEEKEND • May 20-22, 1994

Treat drug users, most say

More than 8,000 USA WEEKEND readers responded to the call-in that accompanied our April 8-10 cover story about the war on drugs.

YOU TOLD US

Non-violent
drug abusers
should receive:

Drug treatment
86%

Prison term
14%

These results are based on 8,037 phone calls and 333 mail votes.

The prohibition of alcohol failed decades ago because it was wrong to replace personal responsibility with government force. For the same reason, the war on drugs is failing today.

MICHAEL EMHART, Lansing, Mich.

"Each eligible individual MUST enroll in an applicable health plan and MUST pay ANY premium required."

:Sec.1002.(a)(1)(2)

Representative Responds:

I received another interesting letter recently, from an important reader in Washington. I sent a copy of the June "Open LETTER" to Representative Nick Smith, who represents the 7th US Congressional District. He responded with a note that was not just a form letter. In answer to my queries about how mandatory the Clinton health care plan is, and if a person will have the right to refuse government medical care, Smith replied:

"Under the President's plan, individuals are required to enroll in a health plan. Those who fail to enroll would be automatically signed up when they went to a doctor and would be subject to paying penalties and past premiums. The President's plan would require each health plan to make available living wills and durable powers of attorney."

Smith is a Republican and a strong opponent of the Clinton plan. He made certain to tout that in his reply:

"It is my belief that government should not mandate a one size fits all insurance plan which dictates what individuals pay and the coverage they are forced to accept. Individuals ought to decide for themselves which services they purchase. I oppose the President's proposal because it would greatly increase the cost of health care, lead to rationing, limit choice, and create a new bureaucracy of 55,000 to 90,000 new federal employees. Congress has begun to recognize the serious problems with price controls, mandatory all-instances, and job-killing payroll taxes."

I hope they have, Mr Smith...

The LAMM meets the second Thursday of each month. The next meeting will be:

Thursday, July 14, 1994
at Sneekers Restaurant in the Frandor Shopping Plaza, off US-127, Lansing. People begin showing up at 6:00 pm, dinner is served beginning at 6:30, and the meeting begins at 7:00.

If you receive this newsletter and enjoy the ideas contained here, you would probably enjoy the informal LAMM dinner meetings as well. There is no cost involved beyond your dinner if you choose to eat, and the meetings are usually well worth the time. If you have never attended before, plan on it this month... you will probably find it rewarding.

The Libertarian Alliance of Mid-Michigan was founded in 1981 to promote ideas that support and enhance personal freedom, free market economics, and political liberty. The LAMM is not responsible to any other group that calls itself "libertarian." The LAMM is run without officers for the benefit of those who attend its meetings. For information about the LAMM, call Jon Addiss at 517/394-0122.

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An Open INVITATION:

You are invited to send in your thoughts, comments, and Open LETTERS on any topic pertaining to public policy, individual liberty, personal responsibility, or free market economics. Your ideas will be printed with little or no editing, and shared with hundreds of people in the mid-Michigan area. If you are a member of a group working towards increasing liberty or shaping political policy, send in updates about what you are doing... there are many others who may like to join you.

Open LETTER is edited and laid out in the Freedom Reading Room by Michael Emhart. Printing is paid for by Liberty Coins. Postage is paid for by Jon Addiss. The views printed here are not necessarily the opinions of the editor or sponsors, although most Interested Parties probably do agree!

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THOUGHT FOR THE DAY:



Discussion On "The Deterioration of Liberty"--
At The Thursday, July 14 LAMM Meeting. (Details Inside...)

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