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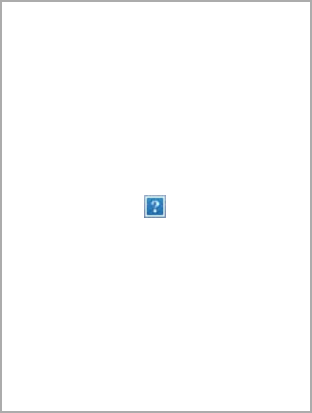
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Hemphill: Give me liberty (but not fairness)

By Allen Hemphill

President Obama uses the term “fairness” so regularly that it is a theme, but fairness is purely subjective.



It is important to understand that two terms are polar opposites – “fairness” and “liberty.”

Liberty is inherently unfair. Every individual is inferior or superior in some aspect of life. Some people inherently solve mathematical formulas faster and easier, some can leap higher, some can accumulate more of life’s possessions.

Most of today’s political issues revolve around a continuum that exists between liberty and fairness, and each individual stakes out their personal position at a different spot on that continuum, but the power of government is basically

designed in the modern era to enforce fairness.

There are statists in both the liberal and the conservative political movements, each wishing to use the levers of power to enforce their own efforts, but it is that very “enforcement” that precludes liberty.

The current kerfuffle over the president’s interpretation of the power of the state included in The Affordable Care Act (aka Obamacare) is a great example.

As if the original, contested, “mandate” on individuals to purchase medical insurance was not a sufficient assault on the term “liberty” — since “mandate” by definition removes a liberty — the president further mandated an action that assaulted the separation of church and state.

(The separation only precludes the church from interfering with state, but not state with church?)

When the president found his original position politically untenable, he found in the law a federal power to order a corporation to provide a “free” service.


I support full contraception availability, and I support a woman’s right to abort at any time short of a cognitive brain wave of the fetus, but I do not support the taxpayer support.

The president says he wants contraceptives “available.” This nation is awash in contraceptives! More than 50 years ago, at the height of the contraceptive debate in the most Catholic of states, Maryland, I easily bought a gross of condoms as a gag wedding gift for a friend! In ultra-Catholic Spain at that time, condoms were sold disguised as cigarettes with a bit of tobacco at each end of a paper tube.

It is not “availability” that the administration seeks, it is the pervasive expansion of the power of the state to provide “fairness” and it is exactly the opposite of liberty. Taking on “fairness” as a goal is a never-ending expansion of government because it can never be perfectly attained.

Listen to the president in particular, and liberals in general — people I call People For a Perfect World — as they seek fairness at the cost of liberty. Fairness requires that some be handicapped so that others may stay up, as if

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handicapping some is somehow "fair."

My concern is not religious since I am not religious, much less Catholic. My concern is strictly constitutional. Nowhere in the Constitution is the word "fairness" but there is "liberty." The purpose of the Constitution, stated right in the Preamble, is "to secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity."

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