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for "Every Politically

End Woke, launching in Vermont???

Vermont has rightfully become a mecca for progressivism. The fulsome desire to help our fellows should continue to flourish here. While I take issue with using GOVERNMENT to fulfill that helping desire, even unfeeling and inept government is better than completely detached individuals and no private organizations to help others.

What Vermonters, especially progressives, should take issue with is "woke-ism". I define this as acting on feelings, with little thought. The extreme form of woke-ism is demanding OTHERS act the same way. And the vile form of woke-ism is using government to DICTATE a few actors' feelings on others.

Remember using government against a reluctant citizen IS force. Every law a legislature passes is ultimately backed up by armed officials with guns.

Progressives don't need force to enact all their agendas for themselves. Progressives need persuasion, and in most cases they have it: sound arguments, high passion, and good deeds. With persuasion, others voluntarily join in the cause. With government, others involuntarily are compelled. Compulsion is not good for the "cause", and heinous for the causers: those who compel ultimately at gunpoint become thugs.

Even remarkable "do-gooders" become thugs when they force others into their government-controlling schemes. Bernie Sanders exemplifies this. Senator Sanders has integrity, but it's a wayward integrity when he demands "Medicare for All" and "Social Security undiminished" instead of "let people join if they want to". By overlooking the good of

self-insurance, and the bad that Medicare has become, Sanders and big government allies who will not let people opt-out become thugs and henchmen.

Progressivism has an easy alternative. Every progressive welfare proposal can be accomplished **voluntarily**. No civilian program requires 100% adherence. Even 10% adherence is more than enough. If all in northern New England who want to fund an elaborate pension program, an unemployment insurance program, or a health care program combine, there will certainly be critical mass for any of them. Ask actuaries at private insurance firms: they will contend that 20,000 normal participants cover all pension risks and even health care risks. Progressives in Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont number more than ten times this “Critical Mass”.

So a wise progressive welfare proposal will attract critical mass without compulsion. Look what it also gains – without compulsion, there are no conservatives who will snipe. There are no balancers who will dilute the proposal. There’s a purity of purpose, and an easy private enactment. With success, the program becomes a beacon to progressive planning.

This is thus an argument for progressives to ACT LIBERTARIAN. Present proposals without force. Use the government platform you have to announce, plan further, and tweak. But don’t compel. Conservatives are wise enough to join a good thing, but if not persuaded, you don’t need them.

Now, please recognize where ending “woke-ism” can also take effect: personally. Your idea can carry suasion with many around you; but where it doesn’t, don’t resort to calling the yet-to-be-converted “intolerant”, or “hate-filled”.

We ALL feel for the Guatemalan whose circumstances won’t allow a U.S. standard of living. But those of us who don’t want throngs of Guatemalans staying in our living rooms, living in our schools, or displacing poorer Americans in shelters are not haters. We ALL feel for any teenager who feels trapped in the wrong body. But those of us who would like them to have closer family members counseling them instead of Marxists with a destructive agenda are not haters. We ALL feel for the single mother of three who is struggling to pay bills. But those of us who’d like churches and other private organizations to help her instead of state-dependency are not haters. We ALL want to address our fellows with dignity. But don’t call those of us who dislike having false pronouns foisted on us “haters”.

On this “personal” ground too, a libertarian attitude is wholesome. When nobody is an inherent enemy based on thought, where all are free to think as we please, and ACT as we please so long as we are not harming others, we have camaraderie. We just might get more done together, but even if staying separate, we don’t impede one another. The libertarian approach applies to the “far right” as well. When the devout are not using government to force religious adherence and are left with simply persuasion, they will attract in good numbers. The non-devout stay out of their hair, and they are free to flourish in their own congregations.

It would be wondrous if Vermont could loudly affirm an end to personal castigation and an end to government force on social policies. Those with the most to gain are Vermont’s progressives. Progressives can’t afford to be tied to Leftism and Statism. Progressives are likely to have MORE adherents when the dinner table is without vitriol, when corporations don’t stifle free speech,

and when government is not being used for small-group / large donor interests. If progressives can 'End Woke", a lot more gets accomplished.

Sincerely and hopefully,

Mark Stewart Greenstein