

Libertarians And The African-American Community

"The danger is not that a particular class is unfit to govern. Every class is unfit to govern. The law of liberty tends to abolish the reign of race over race, of faith over faith, of class over class." - Lord Acton

Libertarians believe in the notion of "individual sovereignty". We believe that each of us derive our rights not from the generosity of others but simply by virtue of being human. We all have the rights to life, liberty and property without violence and theft. We don't have an absolute right to a life without want or hardship, but the rights to life, liberty and property allow us to attempt to attain such a life. We don't have these rights because the government gives them to us. And we don't have them because we are members of any "special interest" group. We don't have rights because we are white and others are denied rights because they are black. We don't have them because we are black and others are denied them because they are white. We don't have rights because we are rich and others are denied rights because they are poor. We don't have them because we are poor and others are denied them because they are rich. We don't have rights because we are employers of other people and others are denied rights because they are employees of other people. We don't have them because we are employees and others are denied them because they are employers. We all have the same rights because we all are human.

Libertarians believe that we, as individuals, can have our life, liberty and property free from violence and theft only if we allow others the same right. I have no right to take your life, liberty or property and you have no right to take mine. And neither of us has a right to appoint someone else – including a government – to do something which we have no right to do as individuals.

Libertarians agree with many observers that the so-called War on Drugs is the single most destructive, most racist institution in the contemporary United States. We don't oppose the WoD simply because it is a failure, though it certainly is; nor do we oppose it because it "costs too much", though it certainly does. We oppose it because it is a brutal assault on personal freedom. Each individual owns his/her own body and has a right to pursue "happiness" in whatever way they choose. Not only would libertarians end the War on Drugs, but we would immediately pardon everyone who has been sentenced for non-violent drug convictions and expunge their arrest records to erase all such convictions. Such an action would go a long ways towards restoring the lives, liberty and futures of hundreds of thousands – if not millions – of young African-American men and women. It would make African-American communities safer and more prosperous.

Under the guise of "fighting crime" the federal government – and its associated local governments - has militarized most local police forces to the point where police are often indistinguishable from soldiers. They have instituted a spy system which infringes on individuals privacy like no time in the history of this country. And, not surprisingly, this militarized "police state" and the abuses which it encourages affect African-American communities disproportionately. Libertarians would restore individuals' privacy and protect individuals' lives and liberty from predatory government forces.

One of the reasons many libertarians oppose the death penalty is because of the racist way in which it is applied in the United States. African-Americans who are convicted of committing "capital" crimes are much more likely to be sentenced to death – and actually executed – than non-African-Americans. Libertarians also oppose such assaults on justice as "mandatory minimum sentencing" and "three strikes" laws. Libertarians oppose the criminalization of all "victimless" behavior.

Libertarians advocate the right of African-Americans to own firearms so that they can defend themselves and their families and homes against violent criminals. Did you know that the first “gun control” laws were enacted in the American southern states in order to prevent former slaves, i.e., black Americans, from owning guns? White people had rights, black people didn't. (Also, did you know that government interference into individuals' romantic lives, in the form of requiring marriage licenses, began as an attempt to prevent inter-racial marriage?)

Taxation is theft! Period! It's your money and your property and neither the government nor anyone else has any right to it unless you voluntarily give it to them. Libertarians would eliminate income taxes and property taxes and oppose the 30% national sales tax, otherwise known as the “Fair Tax”, which would unfairly penalize the poor and middle class for trying to improve their living conditions.

Libertarians would roll back the oppressive regulations and licensing and barriers-to-entry which limit African-American entrepreneurship and which discourage the employment and training of young African-American men and women.

Libertarians would allow African-American workers to plan their own retirement instead of forcing them to contribute to a Social Security system which is bankrupt, which is looted by the Congress to fund other federal government operations – including the expansive foreign policy - and which will likely never return to them anywhere near what they have “invested” in it.

Libertarians would implement policies which would allow African-American parents to help their children escape the prisons that are today's inner city public schools. The public schools – particularly many of those in the inner cities – simply do not meet parents' needs for the education of their children. Private schools and home schooling are two alternatives to public schools which libertarians would make more readily available to African-American parents.

Libertarians understand that US foreign policy is one of the main reasons this country is being bankrupted. By abandoning the current misguided foreign policy, libertarians would not condemn young African-American men and women to die and be maimed in overseas adventures which are totally unrelated to protecting their life, liberty and property and would free up resources to protect those individuals who currently depend on government programs for a basic standard of living while they transition from a condition of government dependence to one of personal independence.

These are just a few of the ways that libertarians will help African-Americans to make a better life for themselves, their families and their communities – by allowing them to pursue “happiness” in their own ways without coercive interference from others – including from governments. Most important of all, though, because libertarianism itself does not subscribe to notions of racial identity and racial stereotypes, a libertarian approach to solving society's problems will go a long ways towards realizing Martin Luther King's dream of a day in this country where individuals “will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character”.

Augusta Libertarian Meetup Group
www.libertarian.meetup.com/331/