

EXPERIENCES AS HUSBAND, FATHER & GRANDFATHER SHAPE POLITICAL VIEWS 02/08/00

Every man worth his salt has experienced a special elation on the birth of his first child. There is euphoria unlike any other when you finally realize you have reached a pinnacle you were never quite sure you could attain.

Your whole outlook changes and the seriousness of the situation takes hold with a whole different meaning. You suddenly have a much greater responsibility than ever before in your life. The change is subtle, but positive.

I remember for my part, I became much more aware of my driving habits. We suddenly had something more precious than our own lives to protect. I instantly became aware that other people have, also.

Life in general takes on a whole new meaning on the day a man and woman become a family. For me, even mere words took on a new concept and import. If I were asked today what I thought the three most important words in the English language are, I would unhesitatingly reply: husband, father and grandfather. I am sure there are very few others with the title who would disagree.

Having said all that, I have just unknowingly become aware of why I am incensed with today's political atmosphere. Politicians of both parties continually bandy about their concerns for families and children without ever discussing what it is exactly they plan to do for them.

There is little need to expound in any great detail on what their actions would be to determine if they are sincere or not. They all lead public lives and one needs only assess the standards and examples they have set for their own children to determine how earnest they are.

I watch very little of the current presidential debates by either party. It is all simply a lot of speculative rhetoric. The same is true of every State of the State or State of the Union address ever given.

My political views and actions are based on fairly simple premises:

- The party that shows the most concern for the country's defense and sovereignty gets my vote.
- Adherence to the Constitution and Bill of Rights is another of my priorities. I support no breach or usurpation of the rights granted by those documents by executive orders or bureaucratic regulations.

- I vote for or support no person or party that continually interjects race into any political dialogue. There are already too many divisive issues without exacerbating them further with political demagoguery.
- My support will never be given to those who believe union bosses should dictate education policies.
- In turn, I will not support those who put partisan politics above the rule of law or the best interests of the nation.

I also believe in voting for a president who brings respect, dignity, honor and pride to our nation.

Politics has been interjected into every facet of our lives and into places where it has no business. Nowhere is this more evident than in our judicial system. The most recent graphic example of this is the ongoing controversy over Elian Gonzalez.

The law is clear and has been upheld in every instance to date. The lad should be returned to his father whose rights should be respected regardless of where he resides.

The present administration's complete disregard for the rule of law in the past ironically finds it hard to enforce for political reasons. The opposition does as well for the same reason.

My conclusions are based on the law and my feelings as a father and grandfather.