

Conservatism

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Traditional Republican conservatism is institutional, not social, in nature. It commands respect for the basic principles of the Constitution, Bill of Rights and foundation philosophies of freedom found in these and other documents such as the Magna Carta.

It involves a love of freedom, equality and nation. It commands a respect for all ways of life and life styles that reciprocate that respect and embodies a love for diversity of opinion and lifestyle. It is big enough to include all those who desire and respect its laws and founding principles. It is proud enough to exclude those who seek to destroy its foundations.

It values mutual respect and balance among governing institutions and governance that guides without dictating. It demands a strong defense against enemies both foreign and domestic. It requires commitment to basic health and safety institutions for a secure society and commerce.

It requires that each level of government stay within its bounds, respect all other levels and jurisdictions and their prerogatives, and hold sacred the equal rights of each individual citizen.

Underpinning all societal philosophies are the basic tenets of civilization that include civility, order and both institutional and territorial defense. Civility is exemplified in clear and diplomatic discourse. Order by agreed upon common law. Defense takes place through an enforceable judicial process and a strong military presence to maintain territorial integrity.

A type of social conservatism has emerged taking religious tenets and attempting to institutionalize them within political systems. Social conservatism cannot be enforced through political systems without jeopardizing basic tenets of institutional conservatism. Individual rights cannot be politically maintained in a system that forces religious beliefs upon a populace. Where individuals are not able to maintain a non-intrusive personal lifestyle of choice, freedom languishes. Worldwide this is exemplified in societies that suppress individuals and groups based upon gender, race, religion or other basic characteristics of nature or belief.

Each generation is tested by various aspects of these principles and has to deal with challenges to its way of life. As a people granted freedom of thought by a gracious God and freedom of respectful action by restrained governance we have thus far successfully innovated technology and variation of response to specific situations.