

"So, I'm a liberal." - Written by Larry Allen  
and  
*Response (in italics) by Counselor Curtis*

"An open letter to friends and family who are shocked to discover I'm a liberal... I've always been a liberal, but that doesn't mean what a lot of you apparently think it does. Let's break it down, shall we? Because quite frankly, I'm getting a little tired of being told what I believe and what I stand for. Spoiler alert: Not every liberal is the same, though the majority of liberals I know think along roughly these same lines:

1. I believe a country should take care of its weakest members. A country cannot call itself civilized when its children, disabled, sick, and elderly are neglected. Period.

*1. You're implying that people, American citizens, would neglect their children, sick, and elderly if they were not forced to pay into a federal government system that "protects" those groups. Not you, them. You assume that if a person doesn't like a program, that they hate the alleged beneficiary of that program, without regard to whether their objection to the program has to do with efficiency, or effectiveness. You're assuming some Americans are just bad, but not anyone who could be put in charge of any government program. You're assuming that the bad people will vote in someone good, and that good person won't become corrupt, or even mess up, and you're prepared to consolidate all the power necessary to allow fewer people to make more decisions for all of us on those important issues. I believe the good people who feel like you do in our country, but who are loathe to take other people's property, like me, will know it falls on them to take care of the needy and they'll do so without being forced by you.*

2. I believe healthcare is a right, not a privilege. Somehow that's interpreted as "I believe Obamacare is the end-all, be-all." This is not the case. I'm fully aware that the ACA has problems, that a national healthcare system would require everyone to chip in, and that it's impossible to create one that is devoid of flaws, but I have yet to hear an argument against it that makes "let people die because they can't afford healthcare" a better alternative. I believe healthcare should be far cheaper than it is, and that everyone should have access to it. And no, I'm not opposed to paying higher taxes in the name of making that happen.

*2. Healthcare cannot be a right. That's impossible, because you cannot have a right to something that could cost an infinite amount of money. Also, that would imply someone owes you something, and that would be paradoxical, because all our rights are equal. The more we move towards socialized medicine, ie single payer, central control, the more our system will go down in quality and up in price. The way to stop people from dying is to free up the market. Remove all restrictions on licensing, and remove all*

*protections for patents on devices and drugs. Let the market set the prices for real and there will be an incredible boon in medicine and drastic reduction in prices.*

3. I believe education should be affordable and accessible to everyone. It doesn't necessarily have to be free (though it works in other countries so I'm mystified as to why it can't work in the US), but at the end of the day, there is no excuse for students graduating college saddled with five- or six-figure debt.

*3. You have to choose. If you intend to subsidize education, then the price will rise proportionally. It is exactly your attempt to make education affordable that has made it unaffordable. If you allow the free market to control education, people will buy exactly the education they want. You're not the only one who values education. Again, it's not your goal, it's your means that are the problem.*

4. I don't believe your money should be taken from you and given to people who don't want to work. I have literally never encountered anyone who believes this. Ever. I just have a massive moral problem with a society where a handful of people can possess the majority of the wealth while there are people literally starving to death, freezing to death, or dying because they can't afford to go to the doctor. Fair wages, lower housing costs, universal healthcare, affordable education, and the wealthy actually paying their share would go a long way toward alleviating this. Somehow believing that makes me a communist.

*4. Yes, it does make you a communist, because you Do believe in taking people's money for education, health care, subsidized housing, and to make wages "fairer". And you do have a massive moral problem if you believe that a discrepancy between rich and poor authorizes you to take from the former and give to the latter, even via taxes. The ends do not justify the means. Period.*

5. I don't throw around "I'm willing to pay higher taxes" lightly. If I'm suggesting something that involves paying more, well, it's because I'm fine with paying my share as long as it's actually going to something besides lining corporate pockets or bombing other countries while Americans die without healthcare.

*5. Well aren't you magnanimous. So let me get this straight. You're willing to do the right thing, so long as the guys with guns force everyone else to do it with you? Why don't you take your extra tax money and put it into a savings account, and spend it on the programs you like, whether or not anyone else is forced to do the same, because it's the right thing to do?*

6. I believe companies should be required to pay their employees a decent, livable wage. Somehow this is always interpreted as me wanting burger flippers to be able to afford a penthouse apartment and a Mercedes. What it actually means is that no one should have to work three full-time jobs just to keep their head above water. Restaurant servers should not have to rely on tips, multibillion-dollar companies should not have employees on food stamps, workers shouldn't have to work themselves into the ground just to barely make ends meet, and minimum wage should be enough for someone to work 40 hours and live.

*6. Required by who and by what magic can they see the proper wage for everyone? You can't just set an arbitrary wage floor, because then you're punishing those who are below it. You've got an apocalyptic view of low wage workers. Many are just starting out, young people, retired, the unskilled, and need jobs. If you tell companies they can't pay less than X, then you're really telling everyone who got paid less than X they can't have a job. You're taking jobs away from poor people. It's an untenable effort at market distortion that negatively impacts the very people it is designed to help.*

7. I am not anti-Christian. I have no desire to stop Christians from being Christians, to close churches, to ban the Bible, to forbid prayer in school, etc. All I ask is that Christians recognize *\*my\** right to live according to *\*my\** beliefs. When I get pissed off that a politician is trying to legislate Scripture into law, I'm not "offended by Christianity" -- I'm offended that you're trying to force me to live by your religion's rules. You know how you get really upset at the thought of Muslims imposing Sharia law on you? That's how others feel about Christians trying to impose biblical law on them. Be a Christian. Do your thing. Just don't force it on everyone else.

*7. Where do you live, Utah?*

8. I don't believe LGBT people should have more rights than you. I just believe they should have the *\*same\** rights as you.

8. Agreed.

9. I don't believe illegal immigrants should come to America and have the world at their feet, especially since THIS ISN'T WHAT THEY DO (spoiler: undocumented immigrants are ineligible for all those programs they're supposed to be abusing, and if they're "stealing" your job it's because your employer is hiring illegally). I'm not opposed to deporting people who are here illegally, but I believe there are far more humane ways to handle undocumented immigration than our current practices (i.e., detaining children, splitting up families, ending DACA, etc).

9. *Well let's hear it. What's your plan? Mine would be to let in everyone who passes a background check and keep the remaining few out. But don't kid yourself that immigrants will not receive national, state, and local benefits. If you don't think they will, then perhaps you'd agree that they should sign a waiver of benefits for 5 years in exchange for citizenship? I'd sell the rights to patrol the border to a live-drone gaming company. Drones with GPS's and paintball guns would spot and spot the unwanted.*

10. I don't believe the government should regulate everything, but since greed is such a driving force in our country, we NEED regulations to prevent cut corners, environmental destruction, tainted food/water, unsafe materials in consumable goods or medical equipment, etc. It's not that I want the government's hands in everything -- I just don't trust people trying to make money to ensure that their products/practices/etc. are actually SAFE. Is the government devoid of shadiness? Of course not. But with those regulations in place, consumers have recourse if they're harmed and companies are liable for medical bills, environmental cleanup, etc. Just kind of seems like common sense when the alternative to government regulation is letting companies bring their bottom line into the equation.

*10. You don't understand the free market. You don't understand business. And you don't understand Tort law. You think that businessmen would poison food they're serving, allow faulty unsafe medical equipment to be proliferated, produce deadly products just to make a profit. You don't see that a fault in your product is fatal to your business, both in reputation, and financially. If fault can be traced back to your product, you'll pay, regardless of regulations, because of 500 years of English Common Law to which we still adhere. Not to mention, your view of business people is just awful. How do you eat out?*

11. I believe our current administration is fascist. Not because I dislike them or because I can't get over an election, but because I've spent too many years reading and learning about the Third Reich to miss the similarities. Not because any administration I dislike must be Nazis, but because things are actually mirroring authoritarian and fascist regimes of the past.

*11. No, it's really not. Trump hasn't done anything outside of a normal presidency yet. If Trump seizes additional powers, or refuses to acknowledge a legitimate election, then get back to me, but people said Obama would do that, but he didn't, and neither will Trump.*

12. I believe the systemic racism and misogyny in our society is much worse than many people think, and desperately needs to be addressed. Which means those with privilege -- white, straight, male, economic, etc. -- need to start listening, even if you

don't like what you're hearing, so we can start dismantling everything that's causing people to be marginalized.

*12. You need to be more specific when you're attacking me for being a straight, white, male. What did I do to you and what would you like me to do about it now? If I've already spent my life working for marginalized people, can I get a pass, or do I still owe someone money? And can't you see that you're the one being racist, sexist, and misandric and prejudicial by attacking me for my immutable characteristics before even meeting me and talking to me about what you want me to do to make up for them. Does it matter if I'm poor too?*

13. I am not interested in coming after your blessed guns, nor is anyone serving in government. What I am interested in is sensible policies, including background checks, that just MIGHT save one person's, perhaps a toddler's, life by the hand of someone who should not have a gun. (Got another opinion? Put it on your page, not mine).

*13. What you don't get is that if I allow you "sensibly police" my guns, that means you'll be taking some of them. It means you're in control then, which defeats the purpose of the guns. Your policy might cost a child's life too, but I'm still able to discuss it with you without assuming you're a child killer if you have a different policy.*

14. I believe in so-called political correctness. I prefer to think it's social politeness. If I call you Chuck and you say you prefer to be called Charles I'll call you Charles. It's the polite thing to do. Not because everyone is a delicate snowflake, but because as Maya Angelou put it, when we know better, we do better. When someone tells you that a term or phrase is more accurate/less hurtful than the one you're using, you now know better. So why not do better? How does it hurt you to NOT hurt another person?

*14. Of course, but don't take it too far. We can't hold people accountable, inferentially, if they can't remember nomenclature specified outside of their daily context. We should not infer negativity from any misuse of titles. Also, adults should not allow themselves to be hurt by words. Man up. :)*

15. I believe in funding sustainable energy, including offering education to people currently working in coal or oil so they can change jobs. There are too many sustainable options available for us to continue with coal and oil. Sorry, billionaires. Maybe try investing in something else.

*15. What you don't realize is that there is no such thing as affordable sustainable energy. Yet, but there soon will be, like within 20 years, we'll have fusion and then there will be little reason to burn fossil fuels en masse. You can't just buy technology into existence. We need what we've got until it's replaced.*

16. I believe that women should not be treated as a separate class of human. They should be paid the same as men who do the same work, should have the same rights as men and should be free from abuse. Why on earth shouldn't they be?

*16. Agreed, and I think that is the case in America today.*

I think that about covers it. Bottom line is that I'm a liberal because I think we should take care of each other. That doesn't mean you should work 80 hours a week so your lazy neighbor can get all your money. It just means I don't believe there is any scenario in which preventable suffering is an acceptable outcome as long as money is saved."

*I think that about covers it. Bottom line is that I think we should take care of who God calls us to take care of, not the Gov. at the point of a gun. If you think the trade off is between saving money and preventing suffering, you don't understand the free market. There is no trade off. The more money we save, the more suffering we prevent.*

*There really is a better way, and it's through freedom.*