

Ron Howard posted this, so I'll respond in bold.

This pretty much sums up my beliefs of what being a liberal is. Leave it to Ron Howard to put it so succinctly.

Please read this, especially if your first inclination is not to read it.

Ron Howard

January 24 at 5:41 AM

I'm 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. A country does not have money or a will. People have money. If you believe a country should take care of some people, you're saying that some People should take care of other people. If lots of those people agree with you, and they do, then why not simply ask those people to pay for taking care of those they care about? Wouldn't you do the right thing whether or not you can force others to do it?

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. One cannot have a right to other people's property. The alternative to forcing people to pay is not to let people die, it's to ask people to pay. If they're not willing, that's their choice b/c it's their property. If you're willing to pay more, then why don't you just do it?

3. I believe education should be affordable. 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. Education is affordable. What makes it more expensive than it should be is that payment is mandatory for youths and there are guaranteed loans for college. If the educational institutions had to compete like other businesses, the price would drop significantly. Private education is cheaper today even though all those who use it Also pay for the public sector.

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. You just said in 1-3 above that you believe money should be taken away from some and given to others, and yet you don't seem to see that causes the problems outlined in the rest of your paragraph. Once you start taking and redistributing other people's money, then it's just your money isn't it? If you think you have too much, and make no mistake, you're the 1% here, then you can set up charities to try to gather enough money to do what you want to do for other people, so you don't need to send armed agents into people's homes and businesses to do it, and if you do, yes, that makes you a communist. That's the definition.

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. Just Do It. Why wait for someone with a gun to force others to participate? Give the money to those you find in need directly. Otherwise, as you've noted, if you set up the transfer through government, of course corporations are going to line up to get a slice for themselves.

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. How much do you pay your employees? If someone came along and said "That's not enough" what would you tell them? Could you run your company paying all your employees 10% more? 20%? If so, do it if it makes you happy. If not, then you can see why other businesses don't – most would go bankrupt. Sears operated for decades on a 2% profit margin. Now they're out of business.

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. (BTW, prayer in school is NOT illegal; *compulsory* prayer in school is - and should be - illegal). 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 I feel about Christians trying to impose biblical law on me. Be a Christian. Do your thing. Just don't force it on me or mine.

7. Agreed. Freedom rules.

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 again. Freedom rules.

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 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. I'm further left than you on this one. I'm for Amnesty. People add more resources than they consume generally speaking. So everybody should be allowed in, but nobody should be forced to pay them money just b/c they're here. The US govt. could grant them land (1/8 acre) out of the National lands and let them prosper on their own, and with charity.

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. Do you cut corners on safety in your business to save money? Would you pollute if there was no law against it? You're mistaking entrepreneurs for evil people. It's hard enough to run a business, but you think people can run successful businesses selling dangerous products? If you don't trust people whose businesses rely on customer satisfaction, why do you trust the regulators, who are also people making money? If they're paid off by evil businesses, then no competition can arise, and the situation gets even worse. If companies can't bring their bottom line into the equation, what's the equation about? The Common Law protected consumers and the public for centuries, but you want that justice engine undone and put into the hands of a few regulators which you admit contain shady people.

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. Ok, like what?

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. Everyone is listening, but you're not saying anything specific. If you're saying that in and around your life there is horrible racism and misogyny, then stop it. Different parts of the country are different. Over here a black man rose to the highest office in the land, and there are three women on the Supreme Court. But you still want to divide us up by our skin color and gender and advance some over others due to the sins of our ancestors. Is that equality? Are you suggesting that all races (as you identify them) must enjoy equality of power? You're mistaking equality of opportunity for equality of outcome. The former can be guaranteed, the latter cannot.

13. I am not interested in coming after your blessed guns, nor is anyone serving in government. What I am interested in is the enforcement of present laws and enacting new, common sense gun regulations. Got another opinion? Put it on your page, not mine.

13. You want to send agents armed with guns around to make sure that people don't have the wrong guns. The entire purpose of the 2nd Amendment is to prevent people like you from sending armed agents to people's houses to enforce all your proposals. You don't even want to hear an opposing opinion? Shoot first, ask questions later. Jeez, and you think you're the anti-gun person.

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. There's an old nursery rhyme which you seem to have forgotten which helps kids learn how to deal with name calling, or political correctness, it goes like this: Sticks and stones...you know the rest. Learn it, love it, live it. The only way people can communicate ideas is via expressions. If someone can limit your expressions, they can limit your ideas, which is why we have the 1st Amendment protecting free speech. If someone can call your speech offensive, and have it banned, then you can't say a damned thing.

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. Then fund it. Why don't you think billionaires wouldn't seize the opportunity to make more billions if there were Really sustainable options available? You say "sorry", but it seems you're willing to send in your armed agents again to get what you want.

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. Do you treat them that way? Who does? Do you really think the billionaires, CEO's, Boards and managers you apparently despise due to their greed would hesitate to hire an equally qualified woman to do a job at 70% of the pay just b/c they're women? Are you suggesting the majority of the working country is more misogynistic than greedy? Do you cast women in roles meant for men to equal the status?

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.

Copy & paste if you want.

You're a liberal b/c you think You take good care of people, and others don't, but you apparently won't do the right things unless everyone else is forced to along with you, and you don't think you can convince enough people to do the right things with your ideas and expressions, like this essay, so they have to be forced, at the point of a gun if necessary.

Love your movies.