

Ten Minutes with a Lefty

Left or Right, People are People

So, this evening as I was cleaning out my garage, up my driveway plods a woman dressed in jeans, a cut-off T-shirt and a friendly smile on her face. Had it not been for the friendly smile, I am sure that when she mentioned that she was representing the AFL-CIO, I would have thrown the walls up and dismissed her promptly as I have developed an increasing distaste for Unions over the years.

However, fortunately for me, I was disarmed by her smile and her genuine friendliness that was displayed right from the beginning. She began speaking to me as to her purpose for the visit. She was indeed plodding the streets to recruit support for the AFL-CIO who in turn would be the champions of the "working men and women".

She was experienced in her mission and has obviously had plenty of doors slammed in her face because when I murmured a mere, "Hi there." She listed off about six different things that I should be aware of. She did this as though she was trying to outrun a clock.

Her last issue she laid on me was in regard to our public school system and the unfairness to teachers and that the "No Child Left Behind Act" was useless. She also added that beside it being useless, it was over 19 billion dollars under-funded.

Again, blinded by her friendliness, I decided to withhold an obvious blunder in her statement. The obvious blunder is if the NCLBA was so useless, why on earth would anybody want to fund it for an additional 19 billion?

In hindsight, I am really glad I didn't say anything because soon after, she surprised me by being genuinely interested in what I had to say on a variety of issues.

She let me voice, without interruption, my opinions that the AFL-CIO should back a measure to remove tenure from public school teachers, that they should work with private schools in order to better educate the children, that the special interests such as gay rights, should be taught at home.

Not only did she patiently wait for me to stop rambling, I think she actually listened which in turn made me want to listen to her as well.

We discussed many things briefly back and forth and remarkably, on our levels, our person to person level, our goals were very similar. We may not have agreed on the means in which to get there the goals were quite common nonetheless.

We concluded with promises to each other to check out the other's websites. She promised to take a look at Speakbrain.com and I promised to check out www.workingamerica.org.

I took her literature and thanked her for stopping by. She thanked me as well and as a side note admitted that she didn't know much about the tenure issue and would most definitely read up on it.

As I read her literature, I know full well how liberal and self-serving the AFL-CIO is, in my opinion. However, the core items on the literature are items that are important to most Americans who have jobs or own businesses.

The moral of this story is that while many Americans are looking for the same things, the conduits available to get their voices heard have are less than desirable to many of us. So many times we have to swallow what we don't believe in order to be able to be heard. In addition, we have to go along with things many times that we don't agree with just to get some things done that we do.

But as with so many things, the answers, the compromise, the understanding comes between individual people. Just as it did with me and "The Lefty". That is what we do here on SpeakBrain. We work it out among each other. We provide the conduit ourselves. The conduit is each other and our communication. This is how we get to the truth. This is how we draw conclusions on the issues we face.

When we as individuals can hash out all the rhetoric we hear and couple it with reality and challenge, we can make much better, more informed choices in the direction of our lives.