



Other Viewpoints

Anti-girl abortion ethically bankrupt

The U.S. House has killed, for now, at least, a bill to prohibit the “sex-selective” abortion of girls. And if this bill can’t pass in the conservative House, it is going nowhere with the Democrat-controlled Senate or the Obama White House. This seems odd, since it’s difficult to make a case that there is a moral or ethical right to “select” children by doing away with all the girl fetuses. Most conservatives wouldn’t give it a second thought. But the average liberal should be conflicted, at best, because this is not about a woman’s supposed right to choose whether to have a child.

It’s about how society as a whole values women, who remain in many ways second-class citizens: paid less, promoted less, less valuable to many parents – and less valued as offspring. The issue has not risen to epidemic proportions in the U.S., which may explain the lack of traction the bill had in the House. There’s no evidence of a great number of abortions designed to select out female children. Not yet.

The procedure is vastly more common in parts of Asia, where parents value boys over girls because of culture, law and custom. Male offspring are simply more valuable. Witness the flood of Asian girls given up for adoption here and in Europe.

The fact that American couples take and cherish these children says a lot about our values as a whole. But some studies suggest the anti-girl thinking has at least a foothold here. Sex-selective abortions are said to be on the rise among Asian immigrant populations.

Worldwide, social service agencies work to avoid this kind of discrimination, by abortion, abandonment or whatever means. They are not winning the battle.

People disagree on abortion. Some churches view it as totally out of the questions, except perhaps to save the life of the mother or for other valid medical reasons. Others skirt the issue. Women’s groups traditionally push a right to choice.

But in this case, we are not talking about choosing whether or not to bear a child, but merely discarding fetuses until the coin comes up heads.

There just can’t be much moral or ethical justification for the practice. We all should speak out against it. But does it need to be against the law?

Many would say yes. Others would say that, while society as a whole views this as wrong, it’s an issue of conscience. Members of most major religions, and certainly most Christians, should view interfering with God’s decisions this way as wrong. The church can and should fight any movement for selective abortion.

But in the end, it comes down to the meeting between each of us and our Judge. At that point, we believe, He will make clear who was right and who was wrong. It will make no difference what the rest of us say or believe. There is no higher court, no further appeal. Support the elimination of little girls? We think not.

– Steve Haynes

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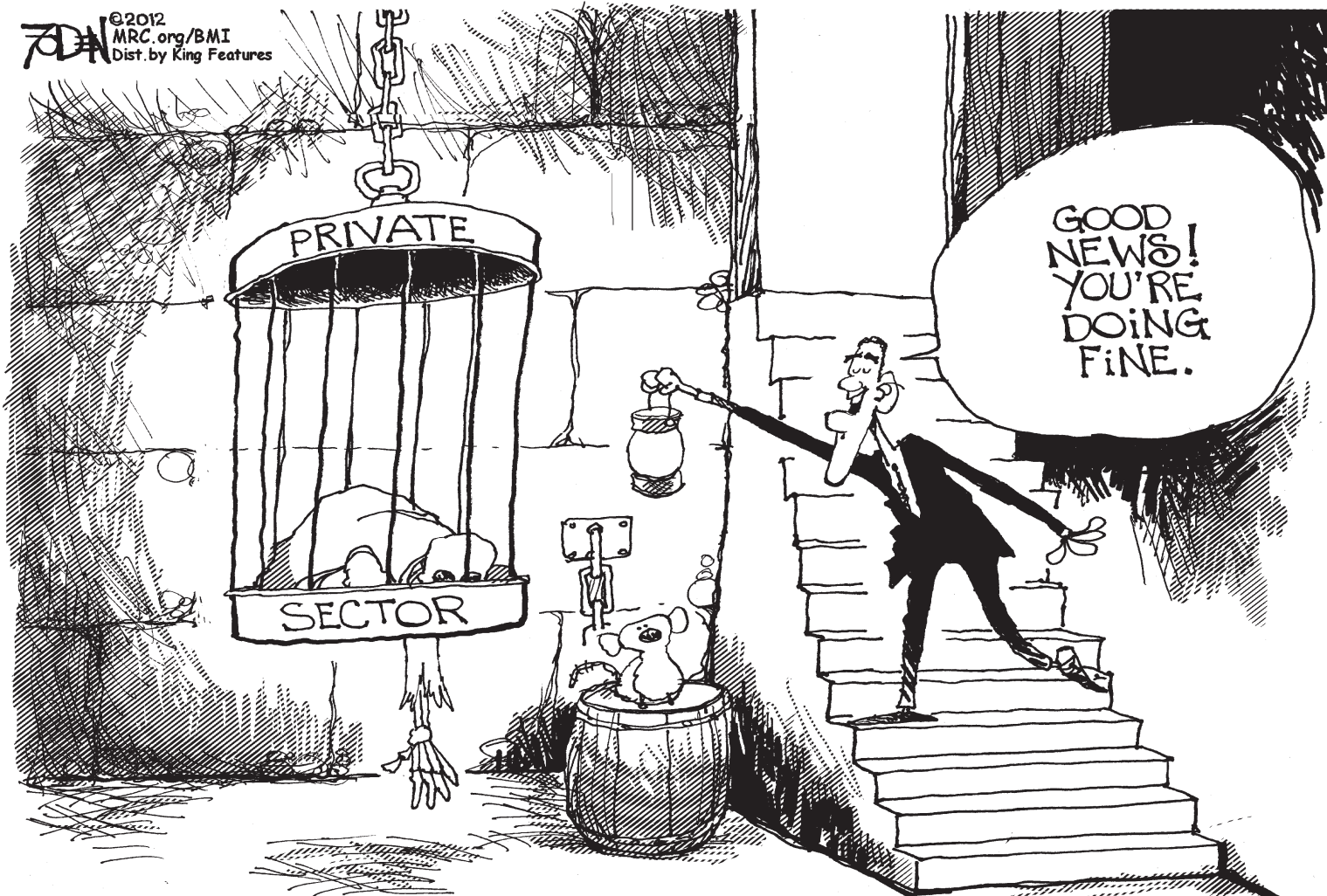
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It's hot in Minnesota, too

So how was it up north? Hot.

We went to the annual summer meeting of the National Newspaper Association, since Steve is on the board, and it's always fun to visit new and interesting places.

The national president gets to pick where the summer meeting will be held. This year, the president is from Minnesota, so he picked Duluth.

(When Steve was president, we went to Santa Fe, N.M. OK, so it's not in Kansas. It was 75 degrees in Santa Fe and 95 in Wichita. Where would you go?)

Anyway, we figured that early summer on Lake Superior would be pretty cool. We checked the forecast and packed long-sleeved shirts, long pants and jackets. We also packed some short-sleeved items for during the day.

And sure enough, the temperature got down to 60 or 70 every night and rose to the mid-80s every day. We were fine. We had brought enough warm-weather clothes to get us by and we used the long-sleeved items on the train, where it was well air conditioned both going and coming.

Duluth is an old shipping town. Lake and salt-water freighters still ply the waters there, picking up grain, iron ore and coal, among other things.

They say the town stays warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer than the surrounding countryside, and that's probably right. It was 64 when we started home, and by the time we



Cynthia Haynes

• Open Season

had gone 10 miles inland the temperature had gone up 10 degrees. A few more miles, it was 87, and it topped out around 91. We were driving through the famous north woods in a heat wave.

We started out in McCook on the train. Transferred to another train in Chicago. Landed in Milwaukee, where we spent the night and rented a car to drive to Duluth, a 6 1/2 hour trip from one corner of Wisconsin to the other. It was sort of like driving from Pittsburg on the Missouri border to St. Francis – and then back a few days later.

It was a long trip, and I got sort of tired of Wisconsin despite the lovely scenery and the car's good air conditioning. We took the long way down, through some National Forests lands, but didn't stop much other than for lunch.

And lunch was interesting. The volunteer firemen in one tiny town were having a hot dog-and-brat roast. For \$3, you could get a hot dog or brat, chips and a drink, just like at home. We got our lunch and heard all about the fire trucks lined up to advertise the fund-

raiser, getting the story from a volunteer with a thick north-woods accent.

We passed Ashland, on the south shore of Lake Superior. It had an old pier once used to load iron ore onto lake boats and looked like a tough place to spend the winter, right in the face of the cold north wind. We passed through Stevens Point and by Lake Winnebago, through Fond du Lac and Waukesha on the way into Milwaukee.

We saw a lot of bogs along the way and signs for wild rice and cranberries. I didn't even know they grew cranberries in Wisconsin. We didn't, however, see any moose, just one deer which ran across the road right in front of us. That made us feel right at home.

But it was a good trip. We visited an aquarium, a railroad museum and a retired freighter in Duluth. Steve had walleye for lunch and supper, and we got to see a lot of old friends from all over the country.

Next year, the president will be from Colorado, and he's looking to have his summer meeting in Estes Park. Maybe it will be cooler. It certainly will be closer, but we've been there lots of times, and it's always fun to see new places and make some new friends.

Cynthia Haynes, co-owner and chief financial officer of Nor'West Newspapers, writes this column weekly. Her pets include cats, toads and a praying mantis. Contact her at c.haynes@nwkanssas.com

Ginsburg: 'Don't use our Constitution'

On Jan. 30, Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg surprised many by advising those attempting to create a new constitution in Egypt not to use the U.S. Constitution as its model.

"I would not look to the U.S. Constitution, if I were drafting a constitution in the year 2012," she told the Egyptian people on national television. "I might look at the constitution of South Africa.... It really is, I think, a great piece of work that was done. Much more recent than the U.S. Constitution: Canada has a Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It dates from 1982. You would almost certainly look at the European Convention on Human Rights. Yes, why not take advantage of what there is elsewhere in the world." (MEMRI TV Al-Hayat, Egypt, Jan. 30, 2012)

Those who wish to undermine the Constitution infer that our Constitution may not be a good fit for other cultures like Egypt. On this score they would do well to remember that we have assimilated every language, culture, religious and ethnic group on earth and we did so because all humans share the same need for freedom from excessive government to fully flourish. The Constitution is the most flexible governing document with respect to diversity ever written, and unless modified by progressives such as Ginsburg, it always will be.

Implied is the assumption that because it is old, it is outdated. This document will always be relevant because it is designed to harnesses the negative aspects of human nature and is based upon natural law; items that do not change from century to century. Man is still power hungry, and people need to be protected, whether man rides a horse, drives a car or flies an airplane.

Other Opinions

• Dr. Harold Pease Liberty Under Fire

Our Constitution minimizes these forces by dividing, restricting and listing power. Should some overreach their power we have elections and impeachment. Finally, we have a Bill of Rights that further harnesses government. None of these measures have shown themselves to no longer be needful. Justice Ginsburg does not seem to understand this.

When confronted with this "horse vs. airplane" nonsense, I ask my students, "What in the preamble to the Constitution, which is a statement of the needs of man to which government attempts to address, is no longer relevant? Outdated if you will?" Nothing. "Were these the same needs of people 600 years ago and will they be the same for those 200 years from now?" Yes. "What would you add?" Again, nothing. Then, the needs of man do not change and the preamble must be the most complete summation of those needs ever recorded. It is based upon a long history of human nature that the well-read founders understood.

But it does not guarantee housing or medical rights, as does the South African constitution, some might say. Actually it does not distribute wealth or guarantee anything except the freedom to use one's own talent to do that for himself, and in doing so the Constitution cre-

ated the most energized and therefore the most universally prosperous society in recorded history. The U.S. Constitution has made this nation the envy of the earth. General Douglas MacArthur virtually forced the Japanese to adopt our Constitution and within a single generation they too became a wealthy country, even competing economically with our own.

The problem with using a constitution to redistribute wealth, as in the countries cited by Justice Ginsburg and as is the socialist dream, is that it kills the incentive to produce of both the productive and the non-productive elements of society. The productive, because their wealth is by force taken from them and given to another, lose their incentive to work harder as do the less productive – because the wealth of the more productive is given to them anyway, so why should they work harder? Ironically, the redistribution of wealth does not help the poor unless wealth actually exists to redistribute, and that does not happen unless incentive to produce exists, no matter what the government says or guarantees.

No, Justice Ginsburg, the U.S. Constitution has proven itself to be the most relevant, flexible, wealth producing, governing document on earth and you, of all people, should have made that case to the Egyptians. Strict adherence to the principles locked into this document would make them a more prosperous nation also. All that you gave them were examples of shared poverty. I fear that your lack of insight, in this most fundamental constitutional matter, may facilitate your helping to bring shared poverty to us as well.

Dr. Harold Pease teaches history and political science at Taft College. To read more, go to www.LibertyUnderFire.org.

Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley

