

Defining Conservatism in Mississippi

Conservatism is a word I’ve heard a lot since moving here to take the position as CEO of Mississippi’s conservative think tank, the Mississippi Center for Public Policy. It seems almost everyone considers himself a conservative. I’m discovering the word has lost some of its meaning, though. It has become interchangeable with the GOP or with one’s views on the Second Amendment or on being pro-life. But those definitions of conservative are not wholly accurate. More importantly, they’re not enough. A conservative is also willing to stand up to encroaching power of all forms of government to the growing corporatism that seeks to govern us from the boardroom, and to the menace to our society that is a progressive culture.

To make Mississippi a leader in economic growth, entrepreneurship, job creation, and prosperity, we have to make progress on the issue of our long-standing dependence on government. We have to change our public policy. We need to value work, remove barriers to risk-taking, free parents to choose the education path that works for their own

children, and leverage the power of the private enterprises of faith, family, non-profits, and private organizations. The faith-based and philanthropic generosity of Mississippians is amazing. It can create so much good, but we have to prevent government from competing with this philanthropy. The best solutions in civil society come from local, efficient, effective, temporary actions where a personal relationship ensures mutual accountability. This is how we used to solve the problems in our civil society.

There are far too many Mississippians who seek to petition government to do this work. Worse, too many individuals and companies are looking to the government for a contract, a job, a partner, or protection from competition. When we allow government to become the Holy Grail in this way, we weaken the free market. We create a disincentive to the formation and deployment of capital. We thwart the opportunity for all Mississippians to prosper. What’s more, such reliance on government ensures only those with power have significant influence on Mississippi, including determining who represents us

in the legislative and executive branches of our government.

What makes a “conservative” is not a party or allegiance to a particular leader or political campaign, but the power of ideas. As conservatives, our ideas are based on bedrock values and fundamental truths. Freedom is a policy that works. A limited and restrained government is the essence of our system. And the principle of ordered liberty holds it all together. Our goal at the Mississippi Center for Public Policy is to play a leadership role in building a Mississippi where individual liberty, opportunity, and responsibility reign because government is limited. We believe this is the only way nations, states, and cities have ever enjoyed du-

table prosperity.

If we remain committed to these ideas and work hard to convince others of their value, we can all experience a Magnolia renaissance. And we can say conservatism made it possible. Real conservatism. The kind of which Bill Buckley, Ronald Reagan, and Milton Friedman spoke. The kind where we are free to pursue our individual liberty and speak our minds. The kind where we encourage people to take action and take risks in pursuit of their happiness. The kind where we take personal responsibility for our futures and stop looking for government to solve all of our problems.

There is an important role for government but it must be limited. Government functions best when it is closest to the people and

when it is open and transparent. And the states are the best avenue for getting things done. Although our national government continues to grow into an unwieldy and bureaucratic swamp, our country is still federalist. We are a collection of semi-sovereign states. Federalism is a conservative idea. As Reagan stated in his first inaugural address, “The federal government did not create the states; the states created the federal government.” Thanks to our founding fathers, the real political and policy power is supposed to belong to the states.

Though I’ve lived in Mississippi for only a few months now, I’ve come to learn that y’all are not very fond of people telling you what to do, especially not people in Washington, D.C. I admire that. That’s a conser-

vative thing, too. That independence goes to the heart of the conservative movement. It was present at our founding. It was what compelled Bill Buckley to start National Review. It was what gave us Ronald Reagan and Donald Trump. And if we harness it, conservatism will lead us to a prosperous Mississippi—a Mississippi where individual liberty, opportunity, and responsibility reign because government is limited.

Jon L. Pritchett (@tobac-coroadguy) is president and CEO of the Mississippi Center for Public Policy, the state’s non-partisan, free-market think tank. Prior to joining MCPP, Jon was senior vice president of the John Locke Foundation. He also worked as an investment banker, executive, and entrepreneur over a 28-year career in private business.

NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET AND PROPOSED TAX LEVIES FOR THE UPCOMING FISCAL YEAR FOR THE YAZOO MISSISSIPPI DELTA LEVEE DISTRICT

The Board of Levee Commissioners for the Yazoo-Mississippi Delta Levee District (the “Levee Board”) will hold a public hearing on its proposed budget and proposed tax levies for fiscal year 2018-2019 on July 19, 2018 at 1:00 o’clock P.M., at 140 Delta Avenue, Clarksdale, Mississippi 38614.

The Yazoo-Mississippi Delta Levee District is now operating with a projected total budget revenue of \$3,974,872.00, (52.83 percent or \$2,100,000.00) of such revenue is obtained through ad valorem taxes. For the next fiscal year the proposed budget has total projected revenue of \$4,246,639.00. Of that amount (50.04 percent) or \$2,125,000.00) is proposed to be financed through a total ad valorem tax levy.

The decision by the Levee Board to not increase the ad valorem tax millage rate for fiscal year 2018-19 above the current fiscal year’s ad valorem tax millage rate means you will not pay more in ad valorem taxes assessed by the Levee Board on your home, automobile tag, utilities, business fixtures and equipment and rental real property, unless the assessed value of your property has increased for fiscal year 2018-19.

Any citizen of the Yazoo-Mississippi Delta Levee District is invited to attend this public hearing on the proposed budget and tax levies for fiscal year 2018-19 and will be allowed to speak for a reasonable amount of time and offer tangible evidence before any vote is taken

DURANT NEWS

by Rowena Hill

Grandsons, Grant and Jack May of Stewart, spent time during the week with grandparents Joey and Jackie Hill while their parents were away for a few days. They are busy getting ready to leave for the mission field in the fall.

All are thankful that Milton Hoover is looking and feeling better. Prayers continue for him, Jean and the family that he will get better.

Mrs. Rowena Dickerson Upchurch presented an enjoyable and Godly program for the ladies group and men in attendance, Saturday evening at Kaffay’s

Prayers continue for Buck and Nell, also Pat Burrell. They are still pretty much home bound. Hope to see them feeling better and more active in the near future. They are missed.

Mr. Plez White is a very special Christian man in our little town. He is sure missed and we look forward to his condition being improved and return to church activities and be out and about again. He is sure missed and we are looking forward to his condition being improved and return to church activities. He is loved and appreciated by a host of friends and family.

We miss seeing Harold Payton and look forward to healing for him. May God bless all who have difficulties; you are not forgotten.

Let’s be good neighbors and contact those who are

lonely and unable to be out and about.

The July 4th fellowship last Tuesday after Bible study at First Baptist Church was a real treat to all in attendance. Our pastor, Brother Lyn Nations and wife treated all present with a wonderful meal with the help of others who brought food and “real” home made ice cream and cake. Thanks to all who helped to make it a special time and the time of fellowship together.

Many friends and family of Mr. and Mrs. William Henry Hathcock are very thankful that he is feeling better and is with family at home in the Flowood area. Prayers continue for him and others that healing will be complete and they will be physically able to return “home” to Durant for visits. They sure are missed a lot since they were always present for the services and activities in church and the community. Come back soon if possible.

Joey and I made a fast trip to Jackson Monday but didn’t have enough time to visit and/or shop.

Sympathy and love to those of our town/community who have lost loved ones this week.

The south end of Durant really looks bad, especially those with uncut grass and garbage on the lawns or streets. We would have a pretty town if it was kept clean and neat.