The Word's Eye View

The Word's Eye View is a newspaper column written by Dr. James Modlish

Barrack or Saul?

(Article 68)

This past week the government announced that the Obama administration's pay czar, Kenneth Feinberg, was preparing to specify pay cuts for the 25 highest paid executives who work for the seven companies which received the most federal assistance. Top brass at Bank of America, AIG, Citigroup, General Motors, GMAC, and Chrysler Financial are on notice that their average compensation will decline by about 50 percent. Since these individuals make millions, it is difficult to conjure up a lot of sympathy in their behalf. In fact, most Americans would cheer the pay cuts in light of the fact that taxpayers' money was made available to keep them afloat. Some would insist that the economic failure of these companies was due to government regulations and directives or union demands while others believe it was greed and mismanagement that tumbled the house of cards. Whatever the reasons (probably a mix of all of the above), these businesses found themselves in servitude to the whims of Washington.

The average man on the street is fairly ambivalent about the woes of these giants, satisfied that swimming with the sharks delivers its own dangers. What will be generally overlooked is the trickle down that is perilously close to oozing its way into the life of every citizen. The logic is quite simple…if the government is funding an entity it will then possess the authority to issue mandates. One of the greatest examples of that are the public school systems. Districts have yearned for more and more federal and state money, but the carrot always has strings of regulations and directives attached to it. If "Bid Brother" has any dollars invested in health care, will he not determine how much is appropriate to spend? God has a profound and yet succinct observation of the situation: "The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender." (Proverbs 22:7) Social Security and Medicare cannot successfully be compared to the present pitch because working people pay into those programs all of their productive years which by all theory has established a trust fund for the payer. The presumption has always been that Uncle Sam has simply been the administrator of your trust, but what is being proposed is quite different. We will all be considered "servants to the lender." Are we too cynical in thinking it may all be about control? The mainstream of history has always been about who was going to run who. America has been a unique political experiment in that the emphasis has been individual freedom which begets individual responsibility. The more responsibility that is cast upon the government for our care, the less freedom we will enjoy. It is as axiomatic as rain and run off.

The White House's recent attacks on Fox News, the Chamber of Commerce, Rush Limbaugh, and conservative talk radio in general serves as another indicator of liberty in jeopardy. Whatever opinion one may have of these organizations or individuals, there is little argument that they all champion individual freedom as opposed to any form of socialism. It is not the unions, the ACLU or the environmental voices that find themselves in the crosshairs because they all favor keeping the herd tight and traveling toward a common rail head…it's those dad-gum mavericks that present the problem. The president and his Chicago cowboys are on steeds that are prepared to pounce on any stray that prefers independence to indentured confinement. A word of advice to the greenhorn…stay light, easy and balanced in the saddle on that cutting horse or a cactus patch may be your final

destination.

Once again, our old pal King Saul comes to the illustrative rescue. After David's defeat of Goliath, Saul saw an opportunity for political gain by rewarding this upstart with military leadership and even the hand of his own daughter in marriage. He feigned unity and declared non-partisanship to achieve executive advantage. With an increasing number of victories under his belt, David's popularity rose dramatically. His network was rising in the polls like a summertime gully washer while the state controlled media was bent over by the burden of drought. Saul's paranoia finally got the best of him… he threw a javelin at David and declared him a mortal enemy. He dedicated more of his energy to hunting down his perceived internal foe than fighting the Philistines who were the real danger to national security. To Saul, Fox was a greater threat than the Taliban in Afghanistan. His administration was launched with tremendous approval rating because he represented change, but shifting sands of favor drove him to levels of insecurity which undermined sound reasoning. Rather than embracing David and utilizing him and his band of 600men to the advantage of the nation, Saul banned him from the pool of networks that were set to interview the pay czar. Perhaps that's a slight stretch but the similarities are so many that one can't help but wonder if God doesn't look at the entire scenario as a re-run of history.

David represented a growing minority that resisted being dragged to the branding iron of conformity; they willingly camped in the wilderness in preference to the luxury of the palace---the point was principle!