

The Word's Eye View

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

The View From a Truck (Article 80)

Scott Brown's victory in Massachusetts was clearly a demonstration of his message resonating with the voters which was lubed with his ability to identify with the regular folks. Brown traversing the state in his pickup truck might seem inconsequential to some, but President Obama couldn't help but take note. When the president arrived in Boston to campaign for Martha Coakley, he freely admitted he knew little about Scott Brown or his record, but for some reason still felt compelled to go on the attack and interject something negative concerning the Republican. The most obvious symbol of commonality, the connection with the blue collar, was the pickup—hence, Mr. Obama couldn't resist delivering some snide comments regarding the truck.

When the new senator gave his acceptance speech, he jokingly said the president could say whatever he wanted about him, but he had to draw the line with his truck. That sentiment could be echoed across the fruited plain, because the implications are deeper than an elitist beltway liberal could ever imagine. It will never occur to the upper crust of Washington that the majority of people who build their fancy BMW's and Mercedes don't drive them, not because they can't, but they prefer a more functional vehicle. The rancher who raises the fine steaks the nobility enjoys, the farmer who grows the succulent side dishes, and the contractor and construction workers who build the palatial homes for the bluebloods all drive pickup trucks—guaranteed! To take a shot at a man's truck is to denigrate his vocation, work ethic, and character. No wonder Americans believe there is a disconnect between our politicians and the public.

It would be extremely naïve to suggest that all truck owners are honest and above reproach but given a choice between them and the baby kissers, it's a no-brainer. More honest deals have been concluded with a handshake next to a pickup than will ever take place behind the closed doors of a Congress mired in thousands of pages of lawyer speak. The truck culture of America still values integrity and desperately wants to take a man's word as gold. Tragically, Mr. President, the presidential limousine no longer commands the respect that my plumber's truck deserves. On January 6, 2009, you promised to ban all earmarks, but your first spending bill encompassed over 9000 of them. While campaigning, you vowed that all health care negotiations would be on C-Span. You did this eight times in front of TV cameras. We have yet to see them. You assured us that all bills would be posted on line for five days prior to a vote; this too fell into the black hole of empty warranties. In January, 2008, you pledged that no American would be forced to buy health insurance, but last September you told Congress, "... under my plan, individuals will be required to carry basic health insurance." When you promised to cut government spending, many of us were skeptical but hopeful. Your presidency has increased spending two trillion dollars in its first year, more than any year in history.

One of the alluring qualities of a truck is the increased elevation over the normal car. This gives the driver the opportunity to see further down the road, enabling them to have an edge in anticipating difficulties. Low riding hybrids do not offer that tremendous advantage—the surprises in the landscape often overtake them. If the reader can grasp the metaphor, the message is clear. Millions of truck drivers have identified the fog bank and have applied the brakes (i.e. Massachusetts), while some are

still in their sports cars, four inches off the pavement, grins on their faces, sun roof open, enjoying the rays utterly unaware that a wreck of titanic proportions lies on the near horizon. Small wonder Mr. Obama, exhibited a disdain for trucks.

I have lived my entire life in climates where winter driving is often hazardous. I have observed hundreds if not thousands of trucks pulling cars from the ditch, but never the reverse. Our president has become very accomplished at reminding us that our economy is off the road, but his Honda tow car solution is upside down. If government would work half as hard at getting out of the way as it does interfering, the highway would once again become a freeway, not a perpetual toll road. If taxes on small businesses were cut, federal spending was severely curtailed, ridiculous earmarks were tossed, trucks would have this country humming again.

I, for one, would vote for a constitutional amendment that required all Congressional delegates to spend four years, not in Harvard, but working in construction, farming, or ranching before they would be eligible to run for office. If they spent some time rubbing shoulders with trucks, they just might understand a bit better what America is, not what they want it to be.

Jesus was often criticized for associating with the “inferior” class. If He were bodily present today, I’m rather confident He would travel in a pickup, not a limo.