



I am an American...

Posted: Sunday, February 8, 2026

I am an American.

I believe I am solely responsible for whatever success I achieve in life, and that “privilege” is just an illusion perpetuated by lazy people. As a white, middleclass male who grew up never wanting for anything, I was still able to overcome those horrendous disadvantages and make it entirely on my own.

I believe discrimination is a pretense created by disingenuous slackers looking for a handout. In the same vein, people who have oppressed others – currently or historically – have no obligation to help those they have oppressed in any way, shape or form.

I believe everyone should be able to maintain whatever lifestyle they desire regardless of whether they can pay for it, have earned it, or deserve it. We all have an inalienable right to be at the very pinnacle of whatever hierarchy defines us, simply because we exist.

I believe I should be paid an exorbitant salary regardless of my qualifications, work ethic, or inherent worth to the organization - and I be allowed to come in whenever I want, leave whenever I want, and do whatever I want while I’m there.

I believe my personal challenges and circumstances always trump the needs of my employer and I should be given a pass every time I stump my toe and need to take some time off to deal with the gut-wrenching trauma that inevitably accompanies such a life-altering tragedy.

I believe I should be able to retire at 50 and draw twice as much as I earned while I was working - because life is short and being a productive member of society is vastly overrated. After all, who wants to punch a clock when you could be lying on a beach?

I believe in the common good. And by the common good, I’m referring to those who think, vote, worship, dress, smell, and go to the bathroom like I do. What my tribe thinks is best is undeniably best for everyone. Those who want something other than what we want shouldn’t get anything at all.

I believe expertise is a myth perpetuated by elitists who want to maintain control over society and its resources. If you have access to the Internet, you know as much about virtually anything as someone who has spent their entire life studying it.

I believe in freedom of religion. And by “religion,” I obviously mean “Christian.” Everyone else should go back to wherever they came from if they want their own freedom of religion. God is very particular about the way he wants to be worshipped, and hell awaits those who don’t follow the checklist in exactly the right way.

I believe we have a God-given directive to help our neighbors when they are in need, just as long as it doesn't interfere with our personal priorities, negatively impact our own wellbeing, distract from what we really want to be doing, or require any significant effort or sacrifice.

I believe I should have access to the best healthcare system in the world regardless of my lifestyle, personal choices, or actual need – and I shouldn't have to pay for it. It's not like our current system is a money-making scheme where doctors, hospitals, insurance companies, and lawyers are fleecing people for the services they provide.

I believe my kids deserve to attend public schools that are second to none and teachers need to volunteer their services to make sure they stay that way. Moreover, parents should have the right to fire teachers, adjust assignments, change grades, and dictate curriculum to make sure their kids are never exposed to alternative ways of thinking, living, being, or interacting with others.

I believe we should continue to subsidize industries producing goods or providing services that are no longer needed or kill people, because profits are more important than people and commerce is more important than sustainability. Next thing you know, they'll be telling us smoking is bad and fossil fuels poison the environment.

I believe Wall Street cares deeply about the problems on Main Street and is working 24/7 to create jobs and make this country a better place for everyone. Most executives lose sleep every night, grief stricken that those at the bottom aren't doing as well as they are.

I believe the rich should continue to do everything they can to acquire even more wealth and the middle and lower classes need to make it their mission to help them as much as possible. Why worry about feeding your own family when the well-off are being denied stock options or additional summer homes?

I believe regardless of what the problem is, the solution is always tariffs and that companies penalized by these import taxes never pass along the cost to consumers. I also have no doubt the tooth fairy exists and complete confidence that Winnie-the-Pooh was a real bear.

Finally, I believe in getting something for nothing and expenditures should be able to exceed revenues forever. All I ask is that the banks let me manage my personal finances the same way the government handles theirs: smoke and mirrors. What could go wrong?

I am an American.



— Aaron W. Hughey is a university distinguished professor in the Department of Counseling and Student Affairs at Western Kentucky University. The views expressed in his columns are entirely his own.

www.bgdailynews.com