

# What do you want?

*And who do you want me to steal it from so that you can have it ... ?*

— by Tony Wirebach, Berks County Patriots

Isn't it strange, the amount of discord and frustration in the world today? It seems that today's culture in America is awash in bad news, bad ideas, and bad attitudes, with little or no relief in sight. It seems like NOBODY is happy today, and the general theme is that somebody-ELSE is the reason for it.

## **Here's a fun fact:**

Over \$19 Trillion dollars in Federal debt, and counting. (!!)

That's an astonishing number. If the Federal Government shuts itself down and allocates ALL collected revenues to paying back it's debt, it would take over 6 years to do so. That's just like someone making \$100K a year being OVER \$600K in debt ... with no hope of paying it back in the foreseeable future.

Since the annual deficit NEVER goes down to \$0 or less (a surplus) the chances of paying off that debt in a timely fashion seems to be somewhere between SLIM and NONE. Even if the Fed were to allocate \$500B (or a half a Trillion dollars) annually to paying down principle on its debts, it would take at least 39 years to pay it down to nothing.

## ***It ain't gonna happen, folks.***

Not to add to your distress by talking about the National Debt,  
but ***what have we got to show for it ... ?***

Presumably, if this spending was morally justified by the wisdom of our elected officials (\*cough\*), then \$20 Trillion should buy a WHOLE LOT of happiness for the American People. If our government was doing the right thing, the amount of money that they spend would correlate directly with the "good stuff" that comes with it.

## ***How's that working out for us, so far ??***

Some folks who are generally in favor of government spending tend to see the world through a not-enough paradigm: that the failings of our leaders are due to the fact they they COULD do better if we just gave THEM more freedom, and more authority to manage society as THEY see fit. That the source of our problems is not the nearly \$20 Trillion dollars of extraneous spending that we need to pay back (but never will) ... but those gosh-darn obstructionists in the "opposition party" (whichever one THAT is, because I can't tell based on the public record). My goodness! By all means, lets disavow any voices of opposition to the forces of government that run up the credit card for our children, grandchildren, and future generations to infinity ... because our REAL problem in this country (and the world, it seems) is unfair fiscal constraints on the government.

*Ahem.*

But I digress. If we could agree that government is a "necessary evil" and SHOULD do SOME things, what should those things be? Have you ever thought about, I mean really, truly, sincerely thought about it?

Government is an agent of FORCE. It has legal sanction to do things that the people who they do them to (or for) may or may not agree with -- or consent to -- if given a choice. (Otherwise, why do you need the government to do it??) Should that force be constrained, or limited to the discretion of our leaders? Should it be authorized by public vote, like on FaceBook? Should it be un-limited, due to the axiomatic "truth" of a law (or a local ordinance) being it's own authority ?? If you ask 10 different people, you might get 20 different answers. Is it any wonder that, despite the fact that we have more government in our lives than any time in world history, we are STILL unhappy ... and broke because of it.

*Hmm.*

Poor America. Poor us. We were blessed with a unique political environment based on constraint on our leaders and fostering as much liberty as could be expected in the flawed, human sphere. And what did we do with our freedom? We used it to forge our own chains of debt and hyper-regulation. We've outsourced our own moral autonomy, by allowing the state to take over most, if not every freakin' aspect of our lives, under the false premise that those who knew better, could govern better. Don't feel bad, if Plato could make the same mistake, it only makes sense that we would make it too ...

The problem ain't them.

It's us. *Sorry.*

The source of our happiness does not come from Washington. It cannot be found in Harrisburg, either. And, I'm sorry to say, it is NOT waiting for you in a mail box at the borough hall. If we believe that giving up OVER A THIRD of our paychecks will somehow, miraculously, as if by MAGIC, come back in greater value through government happy-filters, what is that belief based on? Past experience? Current practice? Or wishful thinking... ?

If a family or private enterprise were run as dysfunctionally as the government, the family would be in the poor house, and the business would have been bankrupt ages ago. The only thing that keeps the machine going is that they have the legal authority to feed the beast -- regardless of the consent of the governed.

So the next time you want to exercise your "right" to use the force of government to do something or to have something "nice" in your neighborhood ... think about what that really means:

- Do you want something that your neighbors do not want?
- Does what you want really infantilize your neighbors, treating them like children instead of rational, morally autonomous adults?
- Do you want something that your neighbors will have to pay for?
- Do you have a right to something that other people need to provide for against their wishes?
- What is the short term cost (both in time AND money) of that which you are seeking?
- What is the long term cost of maintaining it?
- Does the cost of the fix exceed the cost of the "problem" it solves in the first place?
- Just because you want something, are you SURE you really have a right to have it?

... If we are a moral people, then we do not need the force of law to keep us moral. If we are NOT a moral people, all the laws in the world will fail to make us something that we do not choose to be. The force of law should be the LIMITED exercise of force against those few who initiate force against the peaceful, moral, law-abiding majority. If the majority are not moral and law-abiding, then we've got BIGGER problems than just untenable government debt. Some have said "You cannot legislate morality!" but I disagree: If an act of force by the state is not based on a moral premise, then why are we/they doing it? It's not that we cannot legislate morality, but that it is extremely difficult to legislate MORALLY.

**What exactly is morality?** Morality is the struggle between what we want to do -- our natural, instinctive reflexes regarding our fellow man -- but which we should not want to do for some good reason or another. It is an inner-struggle, the self-restraining exercise that curtails our own behavior for the sake of others ... but it has to be grounded in reality.

**For example:** if you want to feed the homeless, you have to have food to give to them, or else your moral imperative is a physical impossibility. Since the state does not own land nor do they have "free" labor to farm it,

it cannot produce food to give to the homeless; that means that the state, in order to feed people, **MUST** take the food (or money to buy the food) from one citizen in order to give it to another. Now, what most people both in the public sector and outside of it fail to understand: there is only one moral law, and all of us, from the Pope, to the President, and every other rationally-autonomous individual on the planet is governed by that same moral law. If it is wrong to steal from someone, it is not **LESS** wrong because someone stole who is wealthy, famous, or politically well-connected. Nor is it ok, just because it is sanctioned by synthetic (as in: man-made) law. It is only reasonably less wrong when the thief is incapable of discerning between right and wrong, as is the case of young children and the mentally disabled. Wrong is wrong. Stealing is wrong. Rape is wrong. Murder is wrong. No free passes. No golden tickets. No indulgences may be used to pay it back. That's life.

### **Government charity is a contradiction for a number of reasons:**

**First**, in order to have something to give out, something must exist first to be taken from one party and given to another. That something must be **PRODUCED** by someone in order for it to be taxed, collected by the state, and re-distributed to someone else. If we lived in a system of equal protections under the law, the law would, by necessity, require that someone produce value in order to fund the activities of the state, but equal protections under the law (in other words: fairness) would require, if someONE must produce in order to be taxed in order to fund the government, then EVERYone must produce as a civil obligation. You can't tax some people and not others, that's axiomatically unfair; unfair laws are not morally valid, if they are not morally just, their legality is only supported by the threat of force by agents of the state.

**Second**, if equal protections require that EVERYONE must produce value in order to fund the state, then the need for the state to support those who don't produce would be nullified. In other words: In order to feed some, some others must produce something to feed them. In order to be fair, you can't force some to produce and let others not produce. If everyone must produce in order to be fair, then there is no need to extort from some in order to feed others.

**Third**, Natural Law requires that every human being must support themselves before they can support anyone else, either by force or by choice. If natural law requires each individual to take care of themselves in order to survive, and that that requirement supersedes the existence of community obligations to take care of others, then each individual, as a biological imperative, must be able to support themselves. Therefore, the **NEED** for a few to support someone else within the community is a farce. My obligation to support you is undermined by **YOUR** obligation to take care of yourself. If I must produce to support you, and both of us are governed by the same moral law, then you must produce values in order to support yourself just as much as (if not more than!) I do.

Once again, supporting the claim that that much of what the state does "for the greater good" is both arbitrary and redundant, playing God in essence to subvert nature's law with the laws of men.

**Fourth**, if the state "should" support some with the surplus of others, it can only do so justly because it is "good" to do so, which means that the state **CAN** engage in charity because it is presumably virtuous. But I cannot force my neighbors to give to **MY** charity against their will; nor can I force them to give to a third party charity against their will; nor can they do the same to me. Since agents of the state (my neighbors, who just happen to work in government) are subject to the same moral standards as I am, at least in order for their actions or our shared common values to be valid, then the state, being agents of force and not persuasion, cannot participate in charity. The only appropriate use of force is not in the compulsion of "good" behavior, but in the necessary response to the imposition of bad behavior. They can clearly use force in circumstances when civility and persuasion will not work.

In order for charity to be virtuous or moral, it must be voluntary. That means that charity lies outside the scope of government authority, and that people who agitate for more government re-distribution of wealth are really pushing for legal theft. Such a practice is a corrupting force in a free and prosperous society; which is why we are less prosperous and less free when government "generosity" expands too aggressively into the market. If something is voluntary, government intervention is not necessary; if something is not voluntary, someone is being forced to do something against their will, and, unless they are doing something immoral, their natural rights are being violated, just "legally" in the eyes of the state and those who benefit from such compulsion.

### **Here are some examples of "state charity" today:**

- obamacare
- public education

- social security
- medicare
- medicaid
- welfare
- public housing
- food stamps

Not only that, but maintain the pretense of a "democracy" in which people who receive government charity are also allowed to vote for those who give them charity or not, and you have a complete and utter debacle, where the people who TAKE enslave those people who MAKE things of value for society.

In theory, the state may only tax surplus, but in reality, the state claims their share first, and the taxed must either comply or become criminals. In essence, the government claims the golden eggs before the goose has even laid them. If they squeeze the goose too hard and too often, the poor creature dies, and the state along with it. The parasite that overtaxes it's host will find both the host and themselves in big trouble.

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**Some people claim that there is no moral standard**, and therefore right and wrong is in the eye of the beholder. **But that argument is *useless* in a discussion about the proper role of government force in a free society.** Legal authority is derived from shared concepts of right and wrong. If morality is subjective, and right and wrong does not exist, then the very foundation of civil government is a sham, and any reason to obey the law is based solely on Social Darwinism: survival (and governing) of the fittest.

*( Holy cow !! that's what we have now. Isn't it?? )*

How do we know there is a moral standard? Because, both an angel and a devil will say the same exact thing, that they are RIGHT, they are GOOD, and they are telling the TRUTH. But one will be lying. An angel will never use language outside of a common moral standard, they are forbidden from doing it. A devil will never talk about subjective morality to justify what he does, because he knows it won't help him to achieve his objectives: to get what HE wants, by any means necessary. An angel will do what is right regardless of personal gain. A devil WILL say or do anything FOR personal gain -- or for the mere pleasure of undermining virtue for the sake of fomenting vice, or to watch the world burn...

No one says there is no right and wrong in order to justify stealing, rape, or murder. They rationalize, and deflect blame for what they do -- using one common moral standard to justify breaking another. For instance, "I raped a child because I was raped as a child," or rather: "I did something 'wrong' because something 'wrong' was done to me, and therefore corrupted me." They never say "I was raped as a child; it wasn't bad, so I thought it was ok to rape a child." ... that MAY be what they are thinking, but it is never how they try to justify their behavior to the rest of us, UNLESS they are a full-blown psychopath. Criminals never, ever try to justify their actions on the basis of non-existent moral standards. What they DO is a reflection of their personal values; what they SAY about what they do is a reflection of our common values.

Sadly, but necessarily, free will allows us to subjectively choose to FOLLOW or NOT FOLLOW moral law, but not to deny its existence. We just can't do it. Any argument framed that way would reveal you as a lunatic. We would lock you up and throw away the key.

In the simplest of terms, existence for all living organisms is a TRINARY function: every activity follows only 1 of 3 options. Either a thing is good (+), bad (-), or neutral (o) ... societies, comprised of people who must act in concert vs. completely independent of each other, MUST have shared ideas of how all of us must act in order to get along, otherwise -- chaos! Chaos and anarchy are the by-product of a failure or the absence of shared, common values ... rules for thee but not for me, or social darwinism.

Countries that are governed by social darwinism, or the Law of the Jungle, are not civil, nor are they prosperous. Prosperity requires 1. productivity and 2. trust, the 2 conditions that make up free trade. If you cannot be sure that your products will not be stolen from you, you would hesitate to expend the necessary effort to create a surplus for trade... why bother, just to have it stolen from you by someone else? In the absence of trust, you would not trade your surplus for fear of not getting paid value for value. Productivity and Trust, which are less secure in less advanced societies, cannot be achieved when the market is comprised of competing moral

standards ... no one could interact with one another out of fear and resentment. This would seem to be the state of affairs in the third world, and why people risk life and limb to get OUT of those environments in order to get IN to this one in the West in general, and America in particular: stability, rule of law, property rights, etc...

So, *why not* rape? *Why not* steal? *Why not* murder? Surely, there is something more to it than just fear of reprisals? Surely, if someone COULD get away with something doesn't mean that they would still do it?

...

Back to the original point: Despite copious spending by the government, our excess debt has nothing to show for it in corresponding value to the people on which that money was presumably spent. That means one of two things:

1. That no matter how much the government spends, government force cannot buy citizens' happiness, and
2. Those who think that the reason they are unhappy in life is because of what "the system" has failed to provide for them are living an immoral life: Immoral because their false premise does not comport with reality; Immoral because they cannot hold their neighbors to a different, and competing moral standard than themselves; Immoral because they are the first ones responsible for their own productivity for survival and for trading in surplus, BEFORE anyone else is responsible for producing for them; Immoral because they expect charity by force, through the state, rather than by persuasion through their neighbors; Immoral because they believe that what others can do for them will be better and less expensive than they can do by means of their own human life value; Immoral because it negates their own rational self interest to rely on others, rather than to rely on themselves and others by VOLUNTARY association and cooperation, of compulsive compliance to arbitrary and redundant legal standards, vs. natural and axiomatic "real" moral standards.

That means that the FIRST thing the state must do is STOP doing what it is doing, to discontinue running up the credit card on the American people. Shut it down.

It also means that, before it can start up again, it must CHOOSE to act in concert with reality, and not spend money or make promises with money that they do not have;

Then, it must absolutely limit any and all activities that undermine the rational autonomy of its citizens, and refuse to do "nice" things just because people in power want them. Eliminate all non-necessities. Hold citizens accountable for their choices too.

What's left must be limited to both reasonable expectations of fair and equal revenues as can be extracted fairly (and competitively) from a free and productive economy. Of that, it must extract a specific amount of income to go towards repaying its debts (perhaps 25% of all revenues, or a flat fee of \$500 Billion a year), and the rest to fund operations that support only moral government activity, justified use of force, not unjustly extortionary government charity ...

The Bible (and in fact most religious books or doctrines) call on us to support the unfortunate with charitable giving. But it DOESN'T say we should take it forcibly from our neighbors! If people cannot be trusted to give charitably and must be forced at the point of a gun to do so, then we really aren't worthy of that charity in the first place, are we? Historically, America has been one of the most generous in human history, and that generosity cannot be explained by mere government coercion. This may not be a popular view, but all government charity must stop, because it is both immoral and impractical, and it has almost universally fails in its stated purpose: rather than helping people with a hand up, we have incentivized their continued misfortune with an immoral hand out ... one that was funded with shake down money, rather than legitimate, voluntary charitable giving.

No doubt pro-government pundits who disagree with clipping the wings of state to a more manageable level will freak out at such an audacious plan as to force the government to operate within it's moral and practical means, but that's why we are where we are today. This is not the subjective word of a tin-foil hat wearing cook in a shack

somewhere, writing his manifesto in the woods before doing something "drastic" ... this is the voice of reason, which is based on common sense and reality: you cannot spend money you do not have and cannot pay back; you should not do good works "by force" and still expect them to be virtuous; the citizens of a country (or state, or borough) are not its children, and all people both young and old, the high and the low, insiders and outsiders -- we are all governed by the SAME moral law, for, if not, then there is no moral standard; if there is no moral standard, there can be no legal standards. If there is no axiomatic "good" then everything else is just spit in the wind, and, frighteningly, anything goes.

Even if it were possible that the nihilistic world view is "true" ... such a moral framework is antithetical to the concept of civil society, and anyone who espouses such a philosophy should be banished to live life in the wild, among animals and savages, where such ideas belong.

*Just sayin.*