

Fort Knox

The principle of spending money to be paid by posterity, under the name of funding, is but swindling futurity on a large scale.

Thomas Jefferson

The internet has created a unique voice for the people of America. Three or four times a week I will receive an e-mail that has passed from computer to computer, bouncing all over the fruited plain, until it arrives in my inbox. One such e-mail arrived a few months ago and I decided it was worth keeping. This is what it said:

We need more money? Remind me what the Boston Tea Party was all about?

<i>Accounts Receivable Tax</i>	<i>Court Fines (indirect taxes)</i>
<i>Building Permit Tax</i>	<i>Corporate Income Tax</i>
<i>Capital Gains Tax</i>	<i>Dog License Tax</i>
<i>CDL license Tax</i>	<i>Federal Income Tax</i>
<i>Federal Unemployment Tax (FUTA)</i>	<i>Cigarette Tax</i>
<i>Food License Tax</i>	<i>Fishing License Tax</i>
<i>Fuel permit tax</i>	<i>Gasoline Tax</i>
<i>Hunting License Tax</i>	<i>Inheritance Tax</i>
<i>Liquor Tax</i>	<i>Local Income Tax</i>
<i>Marriage License Tax</i>	<i>Luxury Taxes</i>
<i>Property Tax</i>	<i>Medicare Tax</i>
<i>Real Estate Tax</i>	<i>Septic Permit Tax</i>
<i>Social Security Tax</i>	<i>Service Charge Taxes</i>
<i>Road Usage Taxes (Truckers)</i>	<i>Sales Taxes</i>
<i>Recreational Vehicle Tax</i>	<i>Road Toll Booth Taxes</i>
<i>School Tax</i>	<i>Well Permit Tax</i>
<i>Unemployment Tax</i>	<i>Local surcharge taxes</i>
<i>Toll Bridge Taxes</i>	<i>Trailer registration tax</i>
<i>Telephone usage charge tax</i>	<i>Toll Tunnel Taxes</i>
<i>Traffic Fines (indirect taxation)</i>	<i>Utility Taxes</i>
<i>Vehicle License Registration Tax</i>	<i>Vehicle Tax</i>
<i>Workers Compensation Tax</i>	<i>Watercraft registration Tax</i>
<i>Telephone and local tax</i>	<i>Telephone federal excise tax</i>
<i>Telephone federal universal service fee tax</i>	<i>Telephone minimum usage</i>
<i>surcharge tax</i>	
<i>Telephone recurring and non-recurring charges tax</i>	<i>GST on everything including your</i>
<i>funeral</i>	

COMMENTS:

Not one of these taxes existed 100 years ago and our nation was prosperous , had absolutely no national debt, had one of the largest middle class in the world and Mom stayed home to raise the kids.

Amen! The above list is just the beginning of the oppression launched against the citizens of this country. There are an awful lot of Americans who, like me, are fed up with the mounting tax burden placed on American citizens—as evidenced by all the Tea Parties. I am not opposed to taxes. I know they are necessary. It is our duty as American citizens to pay taxes for roads, national defense, public buildings, etc. But that is not what our taxes are being used for. In fact, the money the government takes from its people is spent in so many other places that they constantly need to take more of our money so they *can* cover things like roads and national defense. A lack of money is not the problem—it is how the money is spent, and if Congress continues to spend money like there's no tomorrow, there won't be any more money to take because we'll all be broke. As Brittan's former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher so eloquently stated, "*The only problem with socialism is you eventually run out of other people's money.*" Congress seems to be on the fast-track to find out just how fast they can get to that point and every state and local government in the country is right on their heels filling in any gaps the federal spenders may have left open. And no matter how hard we try to get a leg up, the government always seems to drag us down with their hand deep in our wallets at every turn.

I have a friend who came to me a few years ago angry and in utter frustration. She had just finished filing her taxes and said the forms and the filing system were so confusing that she and her husband had to seek professional help just to figure everything out. Her family lived in a town where they taxed your individual income and her husband worked in another town that taxed individual income as well. Because they lived and worked in two different places, there was a formula they were supposed to use to get discounts—not exemptions, but discounts on the amount they were required to pay to *both* towns. They were told the money was to support the infrastructure of the communities and the schools in the towns. "I thought that's what my property taxes were for," she protested, "to support the roads, emergency services, and the schools." She was told there was not enough revenue to cover the costs from property taxes alone.

When my friend came to me she was looking for someone to explain to her why she just got a bill from the school. Then she asked the million dollar question. "If I am paying income taxes to the federal government, the state government, the county government and *two* different cities as well as taxes on my property for the purpose of supporting the schools, then why am I holding a bill in my hand for school fees and a list of supplies I have to buy before my son can go to school? Just what are my tax dollars being used for if I have to buy pencils and Kleenexes for my son's classroom?"

If more people asked questions this, maybe we would finally get some answers. Instead, we just go along as if this is the way things are and have always been—running off to Wal-mart to fill the school list like it is some kind of back-to-school tradition. What it is, however, is tyranny and oppression on a grand scale.

"How can they get away with this?" my friend asked. And the only answer I could give was, "*because we let them.*"

It is our right as American citizens to decide where *our* money will be spent and to not be burdened or oppressed by unnecessary spending. It is *our* right and *our duty* as American

citizens to demand *constitutional* spending. Yes, there is such a thing. You can find it in that elusive document called the United States Constitution.

Article One Section 8 clearly outlines what the federal government is authorized to collect taxes for. I urge you to familiarize yourself with this document because when you do you will realize the majority of the programs we are funding with our tax dollars today are *not* on the list. Medicare, Social Security, Welfare, Food Stamps, Head Start, Education—none of these programs are included on the list—and yet, our hard earned money is being taken from us to pay for them.

All of these programs were instituted under the pretense of good intentions for the “public good” and I am sure the people who started them really did have the best of intentions, but the problem is that “we the people” have no say in the process. We have been completely stripped of our rights. Once our money is taken from us and in the hands of the government, it is gone. And our elected leaders spend it as if it were lottery winnings. They don’t look at tax dollars as your daughter’s college tuition or your mother’s retirement home. It is a living cash box that continues to replenish itself year after year. And when the coffers get low, our elected leaders find new ways to take from us so they can keep spending.

In 1821 Thomas Jefferson said, “The multiplication of public offices, increase of expense beyond income, growth and entailment of a public debt, are indications soliciting the employment of the pruning knife.”¹

In 1821 we didn’t have the Department of Education, the Internal Revenue Service, the Department of the Interior or the myriad of other departments that currently fill the beltway. Today there are hundreds of agencies and public offices that didn’t exist when Mr. Jefferson made this bold statement. Imagine what he would think today. Why, if the Founders had tried to institute such oppression on the people in Thomas Jefferson’s day there would have been a national uprising. The people would not have tolerated such blatant arrogance and disregard of liberty.

Can you imagine the outcome if you lived in the Revolutionary era and government charity was introduced? You use the last \$1.00 you have to your name to buy bags of seeds to plant wheat. You then spend the next four months tilling, planting and tending the wheat and another month harvesting, bagging and storing it. Then you take your bag of wheat to the mill where you grind it into flour so you can make bread to feed your family.

Then you return home, make the bread dough, knead the dough and let it rise. Finally you get to the part where the bread goes into the oven. So, you gather the wood, start the fire heat up the bricks and gently place your bread in the oven to bake. Of course you must keep the oven at just the right temperature so you continually monitor the heat adding wood as needed to the fire. In many cases you go through this process in the heat of the day in midsummer, and of course, you are wearing a corset and full-length skirt and sleeves to your wrist. Wiping the dripping perspiration from your brow, you finally take the hot bread from the oven and set it on the table to cool.

Suddenly, there is a knock at the door. The mayor comes in, cuts your loaf of bread in half and starts out the door. “What are you doing?” you ask.

“I am taking half of your bread for your neighbor down the street. She was too sick to make bread today and I told her I would make sure she had bread to feed her family.”

“How I am supposed to feed *my* family?” you ask obviously outraged that this man just barged into your house and stole half of your labors.

The mayor turns to you agitated, “You’re in good health,” he says, “make more bread.” Then he takes your family’s meal out the door with him.

If things were that obvious today maybe more American’s *would* be outraged. The problem is, the 16th Amendment made robbing from the people much more sneaky. You never even see a good portion of your pay so you don’t even count it as income anymore. Maybe that’s the problem. If you were receiving 100% of your income and you had to write a check for taxes there’d be a national uprising. Our elected leaders knew this and that is why they amended the Constitution to make income tax legal. It was one of the first steps in the trail of tyranny which we live with today.

I was talking to my friend Gerry, a small business owner, who owns the UPS store in my town. His answer to the problem was pretty simple and straight forward and filled with determination, “There is only one way to stop this, we have to take their money away!” That is not as absurd as you may think. Remember Congress has no money. The “revenue” they always talk about comes from taxing the citizens of this nation. They have no money unless it comes from us and because of that, we *do* have the power to take their money away and it is as simple as repealing the 16th Amendment. I have no doubt the people who passed the 16th Amendment had the best of intentions. They wanted more power to help the poor and needy—to provide charity to those less fortunate. And who doesn’t want that right?

I am firm believer in charity. My religion has taught me it is the pure love of Christ and I try to practice it at every opportunity I can. I don’t do it for earthly reward. I do it because of the good feeling that comes from serving others. However, if that service is *forced* on me, I find no joy in it. That is the problem with coerced compassion. You, the giver, do not get to decide who you will give to and what you will give. There is no joy in the gift and you often become resentful of those receiving your gift and even worse, the receiver begins to look on the gift as an entitlement that is owed to them.

Let’s go back to our bread story and fast-forward a few years. The woman who was sick has now passed on and her children and their children are sitting around their dinner table. A neighbor comes to visit them and asks why they are sitting at the table. “We’re waiting,” they say.

“Waiting for what?” asks the neighbor.

“Our bread. It is dinner time and we are waiting for our bread.”

“Where does the bread come from?” asks the neighbor.

“We don’t know,” answers the family. “It just always comes.”

“Why don’t you make your own bread?” asks the woman.

“Why,” says the family, “when the bread is always brought to us?”

Now, let’s fast-forward another generation. This time the family is sitting around the living room when there is a knock on the door. It is the city magistrate bringing their half loaf of bread. “We’ll it’s about time,” complains the mother. “You get later and later every day.”

“And all you bring us is this measly half a loaf of bread,” says the father. “How are we supposed to live on that?”

“I’m sorry,” says the magistrate, “that is all we have set aside for you. It is plenty to live on.”

“Well, I want more,” says the father walking to the window. “Look at those people across the street. They have loaves every day. What do they need with four loaves? It’s not fair that they have four loaves and we only have half a loaf. If you want my vote in the next election, Magistrate, you’ll make sure my family gets a full loaf of bread.”

Fast forward a few months to the next election and what you find are two candidates trying to win votes.

“I’ll make sure every family gets one full loaf of bread.”

“One loaf of bread, well how can a family live on that? I’ll make sure every family gets two loaves of bread!”

And on and on it goes. Do you see the absurdity of it all?

If someone came to my door and told me that my neighbor was sick and wasn’t able to feed her family, I would gladly give my *whole* loaf of bread, fresh out of the oven, to her. It would literally be a labor of love. I would find great joy in giving that gift and it would seem like such a little thing to go through the process again to make another loaf of bread for my own family.

But if the gift is forced on me then with each step in the process of making another loaf of bread I would become angrier and angrier until absolute resentment set in wondering why they can’t make their own bread and worrying how I can continue to provide for my own family when the government keeps coming and taking my bread.

That is the difference. I’m all for helping the poor and needy. I just don’t want to be coerced into it. It should be my choice. The redistribution of wealth is not a new thing. The Founders witnessed it themselves. While Americans largely believed in hard work and the freedom to succeed to whatever heights your labor takes you, Europe was acting on the theory that the role of government was to take from the “haves” and give to the “have-nots.” The popular theory in Europe was that by redistributing the wealth among all the people, all would be equal. It was a miserable failure in Europe and our Founding Fathers found it the perfect example of what *not* to do.

Thomas Jefferson was strongly opposed to the idea of redistribution. He said, “[A] wise and frugal government... shall restrain men from injuring one another, shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement, and shall not take from the mouth of labor the bread it has earned. This is the sum of good government.”²

The book *The 5000 Year Leap* clearly and simply details the principles of liberty this nation was founded on. Principle number seven is *Equal Rights not Equal Things*. Simply stated, the role of government is to protect equal rights, not provide equal things.

Where is the equality in the bread story? Neither the woman who had her bread taken, nor the woman who received it were treated equally. You see, when we allow the government to make these kinds of decisions, no one wins. If the government was insuring the equal rights of both women, they would have made sure that both women had the freedom to provide for themselves and the freedom to give to others. But that right was stolen when the government took from the one woman to give to the other and because of this, neither woman received equal rights.

So you may say, at least the woman who was sick received the bread and that made it more equal, right? Not so. The woman who receives the bread only receives what the government decides to give her. If we were comparing our bread example to government programs today, we would realize just how unequal—and unjust—they are. By today’s standards, the government official would come to the home of the woman who made the bread and take half of her loaf. He would then go home, eat the majority of that loaf and then take the leftover crust to the sick woman so she can feed her family. That is not justice and it is *not* compassion.

So let's go back to our story. The magistrate has just left the woman's home with the bread he took from her. She is standing in her kitchen looking at her little children sitting around the small, modest table realizing she has just enough to feed her little family when a knock comes at the door. She walks to the door and answers it to find the local pastor standing in the doorway.

"Good evening, Pastor," she says. "How can I help you?"

"Well, sister, there is a woman in our parish who is sick and unable to feed her family and we were hoping you could share some of your bread with her."

"Oh Pastor," she said, "the magistrate just came and took half of our bread. I only have enough to feed my little family and there is none to spare."

"Yes," says the Pastor, "we have been running into that a lot tonight. The magistrate collected the bread to give the very sister I have come to talk to you about but he only gave her a crust of bread which is not near enough to feed her family."

"But Pastor, the magistrate took half our loaf of bread for the woman. How is it that she only received a crust?"

"The magistrate and his friends are eating well tonight," the pastor returns. "He keeps a portion of the bread for taxes to cover paying his wages as a tax collector and some more to cover the cost of collecting the bread."

And that is, as clearly and simply as I can put it, our government in a nutshell. There is no compassion. It is nothing more than a job for them and most of what they collect goes to the own self-serving interests of the people we elect to make things "fair." What is fair about stealing from the labors of the people?

What if our story had a different twist to it? What if instead of the magistrate coming and taking the bread it was one of the townspeople? If some guy from town came in and took you bread no one would see that as compassionate. All they see is a thief. Stealing is stealing. It doesn't being stealing just because the person from town happens to be the Mayor.

When the government can forcibly take our money, and with no accountability whatsoever, spend it however, and on whatever they want—and the people have no say in the matter—then that government becomes a monarchy, and/or dictatorship and history repeats itself all over again. This is what our Founding Families fought against. This is the tyranny and oppression that they sacrificed everything for. Why are we embracing it now? The reason America is so great is not because we provide equal things, it is because our Constitution guarantees equal rights.

Coerced compassion has never worked and it never will. Germany is the perfect example of that today. The citizens of Germany are required by law to pay a Church Tax. The tax requires that German residents pay 10% of their income to a church. You can choose which church you want the money to go to but you can't choose whether or not you pay it. The only exception is if you are an Atheist. Suddenly, half the German population becomes self-proclaimed atheists. Force is not compassion, it is oppression, and the people will always find a way around it.

I recently had an opportunity to teach my children the principle of Equal Rights versus Equal Things. We have developed a system of rewards in our home that has really motivated our children to work hard, work together, and keep their toys picked up. I know, that sounds like a miracle in and of itself. Basically, we use colored popsicle sticks which we call Kudos to reward the children for the work they do, kindness shown, how well they do their jobs, etc. They can

then use Kudos they earned for privileges such as electronics time and trips to the park or the library.

We have a strict rule in our house that you can only play computer, video games or have TV time if you can pay for the time with Kudos. Each Kudo is worth 5 minutes of time so this suddenly gave the children an incentive to be more cooperative and do a better job with the chores and assignments. But things really started to change when we initiated the weekly Kudos Auction.

We were having a real problem with the children leaving their toys and personal items throughout the house so I came up with a plan. I found an old wicker basket with a hinged lid in my closet to use as an auction box. I told the children that every time I found something of theirs around the house I was going to put it in the auction box. Once an item went into the auction box it no longer belonged to them and would be up for sale at the auction we would hold each Sunday evening. The children would use their Kudos to buy the things in the auction box.

I was amazed at how well this worked. Suddenly our children started to pay more attention to their personal property and make sure it stayed in their rooms. They worked harder at their jobs so they could earn more Kudos and even started volunteering for jobs. The Kudos developed such a high value that the children started saving them instead of using them for electronics time.

One week my daughter lost her PSP (handheld video game) to the auction box. The children worked overtime that week. The kids were making each other's beds, doing each other's chores, helping with the garden—anything they could do to earn more Kudos in hopes of winning the coveted prize that lay at the bottom of the auction box.

My 5-year-old son, Ethan, became Mr. Service that week. I overheard him talking to his sister, "Amber," he said, "I folded your socks for you, so can you go tell mom so she'll give me Kudos?" It was so cute.

I overheard Amber, who is 11, ask Noah, my 9-year-old son, if he wanted to play Wii with her. "Are you kidding," Noah said, "I'd have to spend twelve Kudos just to play one hour. I can't afford that. I'm saving for the Kudos Auction!"

It was like that all week. I've never seen the children work so hard and be so kind to each other. Amber even cleaned the whole kitchen herself one day. Finally the day of the auction came. I pulled the box into the middle of the floor and told the children to go and get their Kudos.

Noah had the most Kudos at 106. Amber had 92 and little Ethan, as hard as he worked all week, only had 46. I saw the gears turning in Noah's head as he realized that if he just held out and didn't buy anything else in the auction, he would get the PSP. At the same time, I realized Amber was building her strategy trying to figure out how she would convince Noah to spend his Kudos so she could buy her PSP back. Ethan, on the other hand noticed he had much less than his brother and sister and started crying. And right there, at that very moment in time, I had the perfect teaching moment.

I picked up Ethan and held him in my lap trying to comfort him. Then I looked at Amber and Noah and said, "You know you guys, Ethan worked really hard this week don't you think so?"

They both agreed that he had.

"But you know, no matter how hard he works, you guys will always earn more Kudos because you are older and bigger and can do more jobs."

They clearly realized I was right and started feel very bad for their little brother.

“You know, I was thinking that since you guys have so many Kudos maybe you should share some with your little brother who doesn’t have very many.”

Ethan suddenly stopped crying and began listening intently to the conversation. It was Amber, my 11-year-old who was first to speak. “But Mom, I worked hard for these Kudos.”

“I know but so did Ethan and you know, if he was old enough and strong enough, he would earn a lot more Kudos. Don’t you think we should consider that?”

“Well, I guess,” said Amber.

Noah, being the sweet, compassionate little boy he is, said, “I’ll give Ethan some of my Kudos.”

“That is so nice of you Noah,” I said.

Not to be outdone, Amber then joined in saying she would give some of hers as well.

“That is so nice of you guys.” I then reached over and took 10 Kudos from each of them.

“Hey,” Noah yelled. “What are you doing? I said some.”

“That is some,” I said.

“We should get to decide how many Kudos we give to Ethan,” Amber said.

“Well,” I said, “I just want to make sure it’s fair. You both still have so many and Ethan still won’t have as many as you. Don’t you think you can afford to give him ten when you have so many?”

“I guess,” they both said.

“Great,” I said, “now let’s count your Kudos again. Let’s see, Noah you have 96, Amber you have 82 and Ethan, wow, Ethan now you have 66!”

Ethan was elated. He liked this kind of sharing.

“Can we start the auction now,” Noah asked.

“Sure.” I opened the auction box and then paused a moment. “Then again,” I said, “I’m still not sure this is fair.”

“What!” Amber protested, “I gave him ten Kudos that’s plenty fair.”

“Well, I’m not sure Ethan will think it’s fair. I mean, you and Noah still have so much more than he does.”

“That’s because we earned them,” Amber said.

“I’ve saved them all week,” said Noah, “I didn’t play Wii one time.”

“Yeah,” said Amber, “and Ethan played lots of times. He used his Kudos on video games. That’s why he doesn’t have as many.”

“Well, that’s true,” I said, “he did use some of his Kudos to play video games but he is so young and doesn’t really understand the consequences of his actions. He didn’t really understand that if he used his Kudos to play video games that he wouldn’t have them for the auction. I don’t think we should hold that against him do you?”

“I’m not giving him anymore of my Kudos,” Amber protested.

“Well, if Ethan thinks it’s fair then we’ll just go ahead with the auction.” Then I looked at Ethan. “Ethan, do you think it’s fair that Noah and Amber have more Kudos than you and can buy more things out the b?”

“No,” he said starting to cry again, “they’ll get all the good stuff and I won’t.”

“You’re right, Ethan, that *doesn’t* seem fair. Amber, Noah, give Ethan ten more Kudos each.”

“What!” they both yelled at once.

“You heard me, give Ethan 10 more Kudos.”

“I earned these Kudos,” Amber yelled, “I cleaned the whole kitchen by myself...”

“And I cleaned the backyard,” said Noah.

“And,” said Amber barely taking a breath, “and do you know how hard it was to be nice to my brothers all week? Believe me, I earned those Kudos!”

“Whether you earned them or not, I am in charge and my job is to make things fair for everyone. Give Ethan your Kudos or you will be grounded from all electronics for a week.”

“What?” Noah and Amber shouted in disbelief.

“Do it,” I said.

Amber and Noah ripped the kudos out of their hands in protest and threw them in Ethan’s pile. Ethan suddenly became uncomfortable. “It’s okay, Mommy, they can keep their Kudos.”

“There, see,” said Amber, “he doesn’t want them and she reached to take her Kudos back.”

“No,” I said stopping her hand, “we have to be fair. Ethan will keep the Kudos. Now, let’s see, Amber you have 72, Noah you have 86, and Ethan, wow, Ethan, you have 86 too! Isn’t this much more fair. Now you all have the same.”

Noah just seemed happy to still have more than Amber but was obviously unhappy at what had just transpired. Amber however, was livid.

“We don’t have the same,” said Amber, “now I have less than anybody. This isn’t fair it’s stupid. I worked hard all week for these Kudos. If I had known you were just going to take them from me I wouldn’t have bothered working at all.”

“Amber,” I said, I agree. “This is not fair. You should get to keep what you earn and you should get to choose who you give your Kudos to and what you spend them on.”

Amber and Noah looked at me in complete confusion.

“What you have just witnessed here today is a lesson in economics. It is called the redistribution of wealth and it is what our government is doing to the people of this country right now. Remember how you felt and what you learned today.”

Now, for those of you who are wondering about little Ethan and how he handled everything, don’t worry. Ethan was not traumatized in the least. About half-way through the conversation he became completely disinterested and went in the next room to play with his Lincoln logs. And once we came to the end of our lesson in economics he came back to the table gathered his original Kudos (plus twenty extra that I gave him for being such a good sport) and was happy as could be as he spent all his Kudos buying back his toys from the auction box.

Amber and Noah, and even Ethan left the auction that day much wiser and strongly resolved to stand against the two new words they learned that day—tyranny and oppression. Noah and Amber had their Kudos returned, Ethan was twenty Kudos richer and I told the children they could skip math the next day because of their ability to endure such a brutal economics lesson. I can’t wait until we have our lesson on justice.

The point is, by dividing the people of this nation by “haves” and “have-nots,” our government is creating a system where the “have-nots” start to believe they can never *have*, which leads to hopelessness and despair, and keeps people dependent on government and believing they can never do for themselves.

We do not live in the feudal system in America. No one’s destiny is determined by birth. That was Europe’s way of doing things, not ours. In Europe if you were born a peasant, you died a peasant. If you were born a noble you died a noble. And the only way you could ever be king was if your father was a king—unless of course you conquered your own kingdom, which often happened. But in America, anyone born here can grow up to be president. There are no

limitations to success. If you are born into poverty there is nothing that requires you to stay there. That is the beauty of America. We have the freedom to be whatever *we* want to be. We have the freedom to succeed as much as *we* want to succeed. Do we really want the government limiting that? Do we really want the government dictating the rules of success and failure? Just because someone has something you don't have, doesn't mean they are privileged and you are not. It simply means that with hard work and dedication, *you* can have it too.

And when you do, when you have dedicated your time and energy to achieve the success you worked so hard for, do you really want the government taking it away? Do you really want your life's work to be given to someone who doesn't work and has no desire to do so? Why then, would anyone want to work at all? Isn't that what the Pilgrims learned? Isn't that what my children learned? If they can get it, surely the rest of us can.

Every time I think of this idea of redistribution, I think of the movie *The Pursuit of Happyness*. It is a true story based on the life of a young black man from San Francisco named Chris Gardner. If you haven't seen it, you should. It is an excellent movie that motivates and inspires greatness. Chris Gardner is real. His story is true. How can we watch that movie, and witness everything that man went through to lift himself and his son from homelessness, and then think it is okay to take away everything he worked so hard for?

The Pursuit of Happyness is the American dream on the big screen. It is the perfect example of equal *rights* and Chris Gardner is an American hero for having the courage to pursue that dream. So why do we think it is okay to steal from him now just because he became one of the most successful businessmen in the country? And what about Farrah Gray? Now there's another inspiring story. Farrah is the author of *Reallionaire: Nine Steps to Becoming Rich from the Inside Out*. His book is the amazing story of his life and the mother who inspired him.

Farrah Gray was a young black boy who grew up in the projects of Chicago with his mother and siblings. Every day Farrah saw his mother—a single parent with four children—work herself to near exhaustion to provide for their family. They lived in a run-down apartment in the ghetto that rarely had hot running water and was infested with roaches. Then one day while he was in school his teacher asked him what he wanted to be when he grew up and he told her he wanted to be an entrepreneur. His teacher laughed and told him he couldn't do that because his family was poor. Farrah was very upset by the comment.

When he got home from school that afternoon he told his grandmother what his teacher had said and asked if it was true that he wasn't smart enough to be an entrepreneur. His grandmother's answer is what changed his life.

"Do not let anyone tell you what you can be," she said. "Do not let anyone tell you that you are not good enough or smart enough. Remember that nobody is better than you. Everybody puts on their pants one leg at a time. I want you to wake up every morning and say, 'Why not me?'"³

Farrah did become an entrepreneur; first selling homemade products door to door at the age of 7 and then starting his own food company for kids called Farr-Out Foods which he sold at the age of 15 for \$1.5 million.

Don't Chris Gardner and Farrah Gray have a right to the fruits of their own labors? Don't they have the right to choose what they do with their own wealth that *they* worked so hard for? Of course they do, but the government does not seem to agree, because like the rest of us, Congress controls 100% of Chris Gardner's and Farrah Gray's income. The government decides how much of our income we get to keep and we are required to prove to them—through the IRS—why we should be allowed to keep any of it. We are asking the federal government for

permission to keep our own money. If that isn't a reason to repeal the 16th Amendment I don't know what is.

So, you ask, what then do we do about the poor, the downtrodden and the suffering? Well, I like our Founding Father's formula. Clean Skousen outlines it clearly in *The 5000 Year Leap*. Dr. Skousen spent years studying the works and writings of the Founding Fathers. On the subject of public charity he wrote the following. "Nearly all of the Founders seem to have acquired deep convictions that assisting those in need had to be done through means which might be called 'calculated' compassion." Dr. Skousen sums up the Founders sentiments in the following list.⁴

1. Do not help the needy completely. Merely help them to help themselves.
2. Give the poor the satisfaction of earned achievement.
3. Allow the poor to climb the "appreciation ladder"—from tents to cabins, cabins to cottages, cottages to comfortable houses.
4. Where emergency help is provided, do not prolong it to the point where it becomes habitual.
5. Strictly enforce the scale of "fixed responsibility." The first and foremost level of responsibility is with the individual himself; the second level is the family; then the church; next the community; finally the county, and, in a disaster or emergency, the state. Under no circumstances is the federal government to become involved in public welfare. The Founders felt it would corrupt the government and also the poor. No Constitutional authority exists for the federal government to participate in charity or welfare.

Dr. Skousen is absolutely right, the Founding Fathers wrote the Constitution with strict restrictions on what the government could and could not do and charity was not on the list. James Madison, the author of the Constitution stated, "[T]he government of the United States is a definite government, confined to specified objects. It is not like the state governments, whose powers are more general. Charity is no part of the legislative duty of the government."⁵

Alexis de Tocqueville, a French historian who toured America in the early 1800's cautioned, "The American Republic will endure until the day Congress discovers that it can bribe the public with the public's money." Well, it sure didn't take Congress long to figure that out and use it to its fullest. And there are plenty of organizations lining up with their hands out to take advantage. Feminists are always there bright and early—and persistently.

The National Organization for Women has spent years lobbying in Washington for special interest programs that *you* are paying for—programs that keep people enslaved to the government for their very support. There is an old saying: "Give a man a fish; and you have fed him for today. Teach a man to fish; and you have fed him for a lifetime." Our government has become a virtual fish factory. Uncle Sam has been handing out fish for decades and now the people have forgotten how to cast their nets.

The people of America used to be self sufficient and self-reliant. That is how America was built. But government benevolence has turned millions of Americans into glorified beggars. Whatever happened to John F. Kennedy's famous words, "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country."⁶

That is the motto we should be living by. Unfortunately our government has slowly crept into the charity profession and now millions of American's rely on the government for their very

livelihood. Of course if you suggest taking that livelihood away, you would be considered heartless and uncaring. But who is the better friend? Who is more genuine in their giving? Is it the one who gives the fish and has all the power over another's life and death? Or is it the one who teaches the other *how* to fish and gives them power over themselves?

Thomas Jefferson was adamantly opposed to big government and coerced compassion. He stated, "If we can prevent the government from wasting the labors of the people, under the pretence of taking care of them, they must become happy."⁷ He further stated, "The most sacred of the duties of a government [is] to do equal and impartial justice to all citizens."⁸ How can we be impartial if we are taking from one to give to another? The answer is simple—we can't.

For years these principles were taught in our nation's schools, churches and communities but over the years, little by little they have been stripped from us by people who cared more about power than freedom. Coerced compassion is just another tool used to tear the fabric of our liberty.

Years ago there was a story that used to appear in our school text books. My mother remembers reading the story in elementary school so sometime between then and when I was in school, it disappeared from our books. I often wonder, if stories like this were still taught in schools, would we be where we are today. I don't think we would. Our children wouldn't tolerate it.

The story, entitled "Not Yours to Give," was told by Colonel David Crockett while he was serving as a United States Congressman.

During Mr. Crockett's term in office a bill was introduced in Congress that would have appropriated money to benefit the widow of a distinguished naval officer. Several members of Congress rose to give riveting, compassionate and compelling speeches on behalf of the bill and the gracious woman who would benefit from it. Then the time for the vote came and just as the speaker was about to open the issue for a vote Davey Crockett arose and said...

"Mr. Speaker--I have as much respect for the memory of the deceased, and as much sympathy for the suffering of the living, if there be, as any man in this House, but we must not permit our respect for the dead or our sympathy for part of the living to lead us into an act of injustice to the balance of the living. I will not go into an argument to prove that Congress has not the power to appropriate this money as an act of charity. Every member on this floor knows it.

"We have the right as individuals, to give away as much of our own money as we please in charity; but as members of Congress we have no right to appropriate a dollar of the public money. Some eloquent appeals have been made to us upon the ground that it is a debt due the deceased. Mr. Speaker, the deceased lived long after the close of the war; he was in office to the day of his death, and I never heard that the government was in arrears to him.

"Every man in this House knows it is not a debt. We cannot without the grossest corruption, appropriate this money as the payment of a debt. We have not the semblance of authority to appropriate it as charity. Mr. Speaker, I have said we have the right to give as much money of our own as we please. I am the poorest man on this floor. I cannot vote for this bill, but I will give one week's pay to the object, and if every member of Congress will do the same, it will amount to more than the bill asks."⁹

Colonel Crockett then took his seat. No one replied. The bill was put to a vote and, instead of passing unanimously, it was defeated. Later, one of Colonel Crockett's friends asked why he had opposed the appropriation of funds to the widow. Colonel Crockett explained that several years earlier he was standing on the steps of the Capitol with some members of Congress, when they noticed that Georgetown was engulfed in fire. Colonel Crockett and his associates immediately took a carriage to Georgetown but it was too late to help. Several houses were burned and many families left homeless and had nothing but the clothes on their back. The weather was very cold, and when Colonel Crockett saw so many children suffering, he felt that something ought to be done for them. The next morning, a bill was introduced appropriating \$20,000 for their relief. Colonel Crockett stated, "*We put aside all other business and rushed it through as soon as it could be done.*"¹⁰

The next summer Mr. Crockett was campaigning in the Tennessee countryside when he came upon a man by the name of Horatio Bunce. Horatio told Mr. Crockett he was wasting his time campaigning at his house because he had no intentions of voting for him. Colonel Crockett was shocked and asked Horatio why he felt so strongly. Horatio answered, "*You gave a vote last winter which shows that either you have not capacity to understand the Constitution, or that you are wanting in the honesty and firmness to be guided by it. In either case you are not the man to represent me. But I beg your pardon for expressing it that way.*"¹¹ He then assured Mr. Crockett that he believed he was an honest man but said that "*your understanding of the Constitution is very different from mine.*"¹²

Horatio then referenced the \$20,000 bill that was passed for the Georgetown fire victims. Mr. Crockett was taken back and said to the man, "*Well my friend, I may as well own up. You have got me there. But certainly nobody will complain that a great and rich country like ours should give the insignificant sum of \$20,000 to relieve its suffering women and children, particularly with a full and overflowing treasury, and I am sure, if you had been there, you would have done just the same as I did.*"¹³

Horatio looked at the congressman. "*It is not the amount, Colonel, that I complain of,*" he said, "*it is the principle. In the first place, the government ought to have in the Treasury no more than enough for its legitimate purposes. But that has nothing to do with the question. The power of collecting and disbursing money at pleasure is the most dangerous power that can be entrusted to man... while you are contributing to relieve one, you are drawing it from thousands who are even worse off than he.*"¹⁴ Colonel Crockett listened intently as Horatio continued.

"*If you had the right to give anything,*" he said, "*the amount was simply a matter of discretion with you, and you had as much right to give \$20,000,000 as \$20,000. If you have the right to give at all; and as the Constitution neither defines charity nor stipulates the amount, you are at liberty to give to any and everything which you may believe, or profess to believe, is a charity and to any amount you may think proper. You will very easily perceive what a wide door this would open for fraud and corruption and favoritism, on the one hand, and for robbing the people on the other. No, Colonel,*"¹⁵ Horatio said, "*Congress has no right to give charity. Individual members may give as much of their own money as they please, but they have no right to touch a dollar of the public money for that purpose.*"

Horatio then went on to explain there were, at that time, two hundred and forty members of Congress. If they had shown their sympathy for the sufferers by each contributing one week's pay, it would have amounted to over \$13,000. Then Horatio said that "*There are plenty of wealthy men around Washington who could have given \$20,000 without depriving themselves of even a luxury of life. The congressmen chose to keep their own money, which, if reports be true,*

some of them spend not very creditably; and the people about Washington, no doubt, applauded you for relieving them from necessity of giving what was not yours to give. The people have delegated to Congress, by the Constitution, the power to do certain things. To do these, it is authorized to collect and pay moneys, and for nothing else. Everything beyond this is usurpation, and a violation of the Constitution."

"So you see, Colonel," Mr. Horatio Bunce continued, "you have violated the Constitution in what I consider a vital point. It is a precedent fraught with danger to the country, for when Congress once begins to stretch its power beyond the limits of the Constitution, there is no limit to it, and no security for the people. I have no doubt you acted honestly, but that does not make it any better...and you see that I cannot vote for you."¹⁶

Colonel Crockett said he felt, "streaked" and responded to the man in hopes of winning his confidence. *"Well, my friend," Colonel Crockett began, "you hit the nail upon the head when you said I had not sense enough to understand the Constitution. I intended to be guided by it, and thought I had studied it fully. I have heard many speeches in Congress about the powers of Congress, but what you have said here at your plow has got more hard, sound sense in it than all the fine speeches I ever heard. If I had ever taken the view of it that you have, I would have put my head into the fire before I would have given that vote; and if you will forgive me and vote for me again, if I ever vote for another unconstitutional law I wish I may be shot."¹⁷*

Horatio chuckled and replied; *"Yes, Colonel, you have sworn to that once before, but I will trust you again upon one condition. You are convinced that your vote was wrong. Your acknowledgment of it will do more good than beating you for it. If, as you go around the district, you will tell people about this vote, and that you are satisfied it was wrong, I will not only vote for you, but will do what I can to keep down opposition, and perhaps, I may exert some little influence in that way."¹⁸*

Horatio Bunce kept his word and Colonel Crockett served another term in Congress where he would be given the opportunity to keep *his* word. So this was the story Colonel Crockett related to his friend explaining why he couldn't vote for the bill. After he finished his story he looked at his friend and said, *"Now Sir, do you know why I made that speech yesterday?"* His friend did not answer. *"There is one thing which I will call your attention,"* said Colonel Crockett, *"you remember that I proposed to give a week's pay. There are in that House many very wealthy men—men who think nothing of spending a week's pay, or a dozen of them, for a dinner or a wine party when they have something to accomplish by it.*

Some of those same men made beautiful speeches upon the great debt of gratitude which the country owed the deceased--a debt which could not be paid by money--and the insignificance and worthlessness of money, particularly so insignificant a sum as \$20,000 when weighed against the honor of the nation. Yet not one of them responded to my proposition.

Money with them is nothing but trash when it is to come out of the people. But it is the one great thing for which most of them are striving, and many of them sacrifice honor, integrity, and justice to obtain it."¹⁹

Now do you understand why this story is no longer found in our textbooks? With such a testimony, how could we possibly justify the myriad of grants, earmarks, and special interest programs which our government funds? The federal government can only allocate money when it benefits the whole. It has *no* power to spend on individuals or isolated groups—*none*. It is absolutely *against* the Constitution of the United States.

There is no magical treasure chest in Washington D.C. and there are no money trees on the Capitol lawn. It comes from the people. It is *our* money. If Congress thinks all these programs are such a good idea then they should be the ones to open their wallets and pay for them.

My husband and I have eight children to put through college, a family to support, and a retirement to plan for. It is *our* hard earned money that is being taken and *our* hard earned money that is being spent and we have no say in where it goes. Recently, it was suggested by a friend that I apply for government grants to fund some of the programs of Homemakers for America. I have thought a great deal about this and I just can't get the words of Horatio Bunce out of my mind, "Congress has no right to give charity. Individual members may give as much of their own money as they please, but they have no right to touch a dollar of the public money for that purpose."²⁰

I don't want Homemakers for America to ever receive "coerced funds" from the United States government. We will rely on the gifts and support of those who *choose* to support us not those who support us by default. I will not allow your child's tuition, your parent's retirement home or your personal savings to be spent against your will on Homemakers for America. I will not rob the people no matter how great the cause. It is time to stop "coerced compassion" in every form and heed Thomas Jefferson's words—"The same prudence which in private life would forbid our paying our own money for unexplained projects, forbids it in the dispensation of the public moneys."

If Homemakers for America is to survive—and thrive—it will do so because *you*, the people, chose it! And I hope you will.

From Our Founders-

To take from one, because it is thought his own industry and that of his fathers has acquired too much, in order to spare to others, who, or whose fathers, have not exercised equal industry and skill, is to violate arbitrarily the first principle of association, the guarantee to everyone the free exercise of his industry and the fruits acquired by it.

~Thomas Jefferson

Industry pays Debts, Despair increases them.

~Ben Franklin

A wise and frugal government, which shall restrain men from injuring one another; shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement.

~Thomas Jefferson

We must not let our rulers load us with perpetual debt. We must make our selection between economy and liberty or profusion and servitude.

~Thomas Jefferson

A departure from principle becomes a precedent for a second; that second for a third; and so on, till the bulk of society is reduced to mere automations of misery, to have no sensibilities left but for sinning and suffering... And the fore horse of this frightful team is public debt. Taxation follows that, and in it's train wretchedness and oppression.

~Thomas Jefferson

I think we have more machinery of government than is necessary, too many parasites living on the labor of the industrious.

~Thomas Jefferson

It is incumbent on every generation to pay its own debts as it goes. A principle which if acted on would save one-half the wars of the world.

~Thomas Jefferson

History records that the money changers have used every form of abuse, intrigue, deceit, and violent means possible to maintain their control over governments by controlling the money and its issuance.

~James Madison

Equal rights for all, special privileges for none.

~Thomas Jefferson

The democracy will cease to exist when you take away from those who are willing to work and give to those who would not.

~Thomas Jefferson

I, however, place the economy among the first and most important republican virtues, and public debt as the greatest of the dangers to be feared.

~Thomas Jefferson

Other Notable Quotes-

Property is the fruit of labor-property is desirable - it is a positive good in the world. That some should be rich, shows that others may become rich, and hence is just encouragement to industry and enterprise. Let not who is houseless pull down the house of another; but let him labor diligently and build one for himself, thus by example assuring that his own shall be safe from violence...

~Abraham Lincoln

Collecting more taxes than is absolutely necessary is legalized robbery.

~Calvin Coolidge