

EMBARGOED UNTIL 12:00PM APRIL 15, 2009
COMMENTS AT THE TAX DAY TEA PARTY
MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA

**COMMENTS BY ROBERT M. CLINGER III
REGARDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

**Embargoed Until Released
Wednesday, April 15, 2009 12:00pm
At the Tax Day Tea Party at Chapin Park
Myrtle Beach, South Carolina**

"We the people"—with these three words our Founding Fathers established an unprecedented feat in history. Our Founding Fathers founded a government of the people that was to be run by the people and for the benefit of the people. Our nation was founded by the people telling the government what its rights and limitations would be so that tyrants could not impose their personal will upon the people for their own personal benefit.

Our Founding Fathers knew the ills of tyranny. They knew the injustice of taxation without representation. They stood against it. They fought for their principles and what they believe to be right. They won our freedom and with it the right that America become Master of our own Destiny. And in framing our Constitution, they maintained the acute awareness that the cause was far greater than their own time, that the cause would bridge generation after generation. So in establishing and ordaining our Constitution, they did so for all posterity.

Our Founding Fathers' journey was long and difficult. Their struggle against taxation without representation was far greater than our challenges today. Long before our Constitution, their struggle began with a small group of patriots called the Sons of Liberty who in December 1773 held our first tea party in Boston Harbor to protest unfair taxation. The selfless and patriotic acts of our Founding Fathers and those Sons of Liberty epitomize what could be called the American Spirit. And today, we join together with hundreds of thousands of other modern day patriots across our great nation to reaffirm our belief in that American Spirit and reaffirm our commitment to those ideals

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that join us together for a cause that is once again far greater than our own time.

America has faced many challenges throughout its history, and Americans have always met those challenges head-on with resolve and determination. And we have always overcome those challenges. Now, we are faced with a great financial challenge. Elected officials from both political parties have taken us on a massive spending spree that has weakened our financial standing in the world, indebted future generations with massive financial obligations, imposed stealth tax increases on the American public, and all the while being masterfully disguised as economic stimulus plans.

Today, we're here to say that we've had enough!

Today, we're here to send a message to Washington that we the people have had enough runaway government spending!

We the people have had enough taxes!

We the people have had enough bailouts of big companies!

The problem is complex but is yet quite simple at the same time. The federal government has grown beyond its means. Since the Great Depression, modern politicians of both parties have seen the government as a massive spending machine and a way to reward loyal constituents with pork projects. Little consideration has apparently been given to the financial consequences of their spending decisions.

Americans' spending capacity is bound by their level of income. In the long run, we cannot spend more than we make. If individuals' spending is bound by their cash intake, why isn't the federal government bound by its own intake? Quite simply, the federal government borrows to fund its insatiable appetite for spending. We issue debt to whoever will buy it—individual investors, pensions, foreign countries like China. And since 1835 when Andrew Jackson became the only president to ever pay off the

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national debt, our federal debt has grown to almost \$11.2 trillion. And it continues to grow by nearly \$4 billion per day. But contrary to popular belief this isn't free money. We pay for it now and future generations will continue to pay for it in the future through a higher tax burden. And as the federal debt continues to grow, we become less masters of our own destiny and more slaves to our debt holders.

I ask you this: Is saddling future generations with massive financial burdens the American Spirit?

NO!

In hard times, Americans are forced to cut their spending. This most recent economic downturn has caused many Americans to reassess their spending priorities. But while the American public is cutting its spending, the federal government continues to increase its spending. In good times and bad, the federal government continues to spend. In fact, total federal outlays have increased every single year since 1966. If the American people have to cut back, shouldn't the federal government cut back as well?

But the bigger the spending gets, the bigger the government gets. And the bigger the government gets the more difficult it will be to get our finances under control. In fact, the most recent economic stimulus plan was more bloated than ever. The \$1 trillion stimulus plan passed in February included spending of nearly \$1 billion in funding for Amtrak, \$150 million for the Smithsonian Institute, over \$6 billion for home weatherization, \$50 million in infrastructure in Guam, \$600 million for hybrid vehicles for federal employees, and the list goes on.

I ask you: Is this the American Spirit?

NO!

Last fall, the federal government passed an economic stimulus plan costing \$700 billion to bailout banks that had made bad loans during the real estate boom. The plan, while well intentioned, was a disaster. The banks took the money from the taxpayers and ran. They paid out big bonuses to their employees and CEOs. The banks made the bad loans but then wanted to pawn off responsibility for

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those bad decisions onto the taxpayers. This was nothing more than a massive fleecing of the American taxpayers who are left holding the bag for billions. And despite the financial bailout from the government, credit to individuals, small businesses, and homeowners dried up and did little to help homeowners facing foreclosure.

I ask you: Is this the American Spirit?

NO!

The federal government used taxpayer money to bailout AIG, and then the executives paid out big bonuses and took top employees on a retreat at a lavish resort. All of this on the taxpayers' dime.

Is this the American Spirit?

NO!

Then, GM and Chrysler's CEOs went to Washington on their private jets with their hands out for their share of the taxpayers' money as a bailout. They went to Washington, got the money to make payroll for Christmas, didn't provide a viable business plan, and now they want even more money. All of this while the little guys, the hardworking men and women who own businesses on Main Street, are struggling to make a living. All of this while entrepreneurs struggle to find credit for their businesses. All of this while thousands of small businesses are being forced to layoff workers. All of this while the biggest job creators in America, small businesses, pay one of the highest corporate tax rates in the world.

Is this the American Spirit?

NO!

Throughout our nation, state and local government budgets have been severely negatively impacted by the downturn in the economy. But many, rather than cut spending, are seeking ways to raise revenues through

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creative tax increases. All of this at a time when economic prosperity is significantly weakened. American taxpayers may have to do without personally but God forbid that any government should do without.

Is this the American Spirit?

NO!

Since the credit crisis began back in late 2007, the Congress, the Federal Reserve, the Treasury, and other government agencies have provided nearly \$10 trillion in financial assistance collectively to private industry, namely banks. This is enough to pay off nearly 90% of all residential mortgages in America. Yet homeowners are still facing foreclosures, small businesses don't have adequate access to credit markets, and the very people the programs were intended to help, the American people, have seen little benefit.

Is this the American Spirit?

NO!

At the end of the day, the most important factor from these events is the following: the federal government has undertaken financially irresponsible actions that indebt future generations with significant financial burdens when there is no guarantee that the monies spent on the numerous bailouts will ever be repaid to the government. We the taxpayers have been fleeced so that politically powerful special interest groups can benefit. The cost to us will ultimately be higher taxes down the road.

Is this the American Spirit?

NO!

Then let us stand together against this trend towards higher taxes. We are indeed taxed enough already. All great causes start somewhere. In 1773, our cause started in Boston Harbor. Today, our cause begins here in this park and in hundreds of places just like this all across America. The task ahead is difficult and daunting. Many

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will grow tired or complacent along the way and many may fall behind. But we must not let the fire that has brought us all here today go dark. We must remain firm and resolute in our effort to right the wrongs that are being done.

As we leave here today, let us remember what Theodore Roosevelt once said¹:

It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.

Shame on the man of cultivated taste who permits refinement to develop into fastidiousness that unfits him for doing the rough work of a workaday world. Among the free peoples who govern themselves there is but a small field of usefulness open for the men of cloistered life who shrink from contact with their fellows. Still less room is there for those who deride of slight what is done by those who actually bear the brunt of the day; nor yet for those others who always profess that they would like to take action, if only the conditions of life were not exactly what they actually are. There is little use for the being whose tepid soul knows nothing of great and generous emotion, of the high pride, the stern belief, the lofty enthusiasm, of the men who quell the storm and ride the thunder. Well for these men if they succeed; well also, though not so well, if they fail, given only that they have nobly ventured, and have put forth all their heart and strength.

¹ Theodore Roosevelt at the Sorbonne, Paris, France, April 23, 1910.

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The hope of America is as bright today as it has even been. And the patriots of today are little changed from the patriots of the 1770s—those Sons of Liberty who stood up against injustice, tyranny, and taxation without representation. We must remain vigilant that that hope and greatness are never weakened. So long as we are united, so long as we always remember what America stands for, so long as we never stop loving our country, so long as we never sacrifice our rights, so long as we will always be willing to defend our freedom, so long as we don't forget who we are, there will always be patriots, and the American Spirit shall persevere.

Thank you all, God bless, and God bless America!

