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Spring 2009 ACTION Newsletter

Message from the President by Robert Kettering

BIG ... BIG ... BIG ... SPENDER

In the final term of the Bush presidency, we heard over and over from the media that spending (especially for the Iraq War) was too high, and that to have these unbalanced budgets was unacceptable.

During the campaign, candidate Obama spoke often about the need to control spending and balance our budget. He even reminisced about the balanced budgets of the Clinton administration (although no mention of the republican house and senate that actually produced those balanced budgets). Finally, by election day, many Americans were convinced that the change he talked about was actually a move toward a more responsible government including more responsible government spending.

Now after only a few months of Obama, it is clear that responsible government spending has no part whatsoever in the change that has overtaken America. In his first "accomplishment" he passed a trillion dollar "stimulus package" that even the Congressional Budget Office says will do more harm than good.

The fact is this year's budget deficit will be larger than the budget deficits of all 8 years of President Bush's budgets combined! The current annual federal budget is \$3 trillion with a deficit of \$600 billion. Next year we're going to have a 1.6 to 2 trillion dollar deficit! But where is the media now? Where is the concern (or even the reporting) over these massive deficits? Folks, this is unsustainable. We can not continue to spend with no boundaries or discipline. The federal government is throwing away a giant fraction of our wealth – possibly bankrupting us – for nothing.

Last November, many Americans voted for change, but I sincerely doubt if this is the kind of change they expected.

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing."
Edmund Burke

Pigs at the Trough

By Cal Thomas

Like pigs waiting in line to get their snouts in the feeding trough, come many of the nation's governors — on the heels of the mayors — asking Washington for bailout money.

Democratic governors from overspending states like New York, Wisconsin, New Jersey, Massachusetts and Ohio are among those seeking financial deliverance. The governors want Washington to pony up \$1 trillion for their absolutely-essential-non-negotiable-if-we-don't-get-the-money-people-will-starve programs.

New York Governor David Paterson claims that, because tax revenues have plunged, 43 states now have budget deficits totaling around \$100 billion. No, those states have deficits because when times were good and the money was rolling in they thought they could get away with endless new programs, while putting little or no money aside for the inevitable rainy day. Neither did they consider which programs were necessary and which ones were just politically beneficial. Or, maybe they did and they opted for politically beneficial, thus creating their problem, and ours.

Notice the sleight of hand about to be perpetrated on hardworking taxpayers. In the end, it is we who pay for the plans of politicians who are unable, or unwilling, to control themselves when it comes to other peoples' money. When Republicans cut taxes, Democrats scream about growing deficits. But Democrats never worry about the deficit when they spend more than what the government takes in. So it really isn't about the deficit at all. It is about how much of our hard-earned money the Democrats, mostly, will allow us to keep. When you understand this, you understand everything about politics and politicians.

Every program created and sustained by Democrats (and increasingly some Republicans) must be kept. Once created, they must continue, no matter how unnecessary, outdated, or corrupt they become. The proof of eternal life is to be found in government programs, which are harder to kill than a vampire, another blood-sucking beast.

The incoming Obama administration wants to spend gobs of money on "infrastructure," creating government jobs that will end when the work is completed. Isn't infrastructure primarily supposed to be the work of state and local governments? Isn't the gasoline tax supposed to go to build and repair local roads and bridges? The federal responsibility should begin and end with the interstate highway system.

The governors' request for more money from Washington is also about unfunded mandates, the rising cost of Medicare and Medicaid and a lot of other "entitlement" programs that could have been made solvent during the Bush administration, which tried, but was unable to succeed due to opposition from Democrats who preferred to have an issue rather than a solution.

It isn't that options, other than overspending and misspending, don't exist. The Heritage Foundation's Brian Riedel, Stuart Butler and others (heritage.org), the National Taxpayers Union (ntu.org) and Citizens Against Government Waste (cagw.org) have all written thoughtful and nonpartisan papers on the subject of government pork. The problem is that Democratic politicians (and too many Republican politicians, which is why the GOP is again in the minority) have refused to adopt them. Again, Democrats would rather foster a dependency on government so that people would be less self-reliant and more dependent on politicians for their current and future welfare.

This is a formula for socialism and for whatever political system follows to enforce it, though socialism advances even in our supposed constitutional republic. Anyone who relies less on themselves and more on government will see their freedoms erode. It has always been this way.

If this growing dependence on ever more costly and overreaching government continues, we may have to change the familiar letter abbreviation for this country from USA to ATM.

Lancaster County ACTION Quarterly Breakfast Meeting



Speaker: The Honorable Cheryl Allen “Can We Abandon Truth”

Saturday, April 11, 2009

8:00 AM - 10:00 AM

Leola Family Restaurant, 365 West Main St, Leola

With almost twenty years of experience sitting on the bench as a judge in Pennsylvania, Judge Cheryl Lynn Allen, presently serves on PA Superior Court and is running for PA Supreme Court. She is one of the most qualified Republicans to ever run for the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

As a Judge who has served at the state and local level, Judge Allen is known for being insightful, tough on crime, and fair. Judge Allen has earned the respect of her colleagues and the support of Pennsylvanians who want a judge with honesty and integrity.

Those who know Judge Allen, find she truly walks the walk and talks the talk - she means what she says. Pennsylvanians will be proud to have Judge Cheryl Allen serving on the Supreme Court.

Please reserve your seat at the quarterly breakfast by calling the ACTION office (717-569-0148) by Wednesday, April 8, 2009. The cost is \$9.00 per person. Pre-registration is strongly encouraged.

A Message from the Treasurer - Is Your Membership Current?

Please take a moment to make certain that your membership is current, by looking at the mailing label on this newsletter to see if your dues are up-to-date. The number “2009” should appear in the parenthesis on the label. If it does not, please fill out the form below and mail to:

Lancaster County ACTION, Office of the Treasurer, 1939 Marietta Avenue, Lancaster, PA 17603

clip and send

I would like to begin/renew (\$20.00 per household) my membership in Lancaster County ACTION.

(Please make check payable to **Lancaster County ACTION.**)

I'd like to volunteer for the following ACTION Committee(s):

- Church Contact/Prayer Fund Raising Legislative Issues Newsletter School District Coordinator
- Education Growth/Membership Library Quarterly Breakfast Voter Guides

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

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Please clip and return to Lancaster County ACTION, 1939 Marietta Avenue, Lancaster, PA 17603. Thank you!

Obama Imperils ‘Conscience’ Rule

Lancaster New Era, Editorial

President Barack Obama apparently is going forward with his plan to undo a regulation aimed at strengthening job protections for doctors, nurses and other health-care workers who refuse to provide medical services, such as abortions, because of moral qualms.

The rule, instituted in the last days of the Bush administration, requires hospitals and other institutions to certify their compliance with laws protecting the rights of moral objectors.

Those that don’t risk losing federal money.

Federal law has long prohibited discrimination against medical personnel who refuse to perform abortions, or provide referrals for them, on religious or moral grounds. But the

Bush rule goes an important step farther by using federal funds as a weighty incentive to ensure compliance.

Proponents – pro-lifers – say the Bush regulation clarifies federal policies and raises awareness about the rights of medical providers to follow their consciences. Others look at the issue as it pertains to the First Amendment. The first principle of free speech is “protected conscience,” they say.

But abortion-rights advocates complain the regulation is too broad and threatens patients’ rights. The rule could be used to refuse birth control, family-planning services and counseling for vaccines and transfusions, they say.

Nearly 600,000 hospitals, doctors’ offices, clinics and pharmacies have a stake in the regulation, whatever form it takes.

The Obama administration insists a final decision has not been made, and it left the door open to compro-

mise. The rule could be rewritten with a narrower scope, administration officials say. The administration should let the regulation stand as is.

The rule adds an important layer of protection for doctors and health-care workers who may feel pressured to participate in medical procedures they consider morally wrong.

The rule does not prevent women from undergoing

abortions or keep them from getting birth control pills or other forms of contraception. It only means they will have to find doctors and institutions willing to provide these services – services, by the way, that are widely available today.

The mere fact that Obama is reviewing the rule suggests a

change, and not one for the better, in our view.

And it’s not the only thing the president has done in this regard.

In January, Obama signed an executive order that lifted restrictions on federal funding for international family planning groups that promote abortion.

In all likelihood, he will lift federal restrictions on federal funding for human embryonic stem cell research – a procedure that requires the destruction of human embryos.

These actions are especially disappointing to conservatives and other abortion opponents, who had taken Obama at his word when he said he would seek “common ground” on an issue that has divided the nation for decades.

Obama is not seeking common ground or a path to compromise or conciliation on this volatile issue. For him, it’s becoming more like, “It’s my way or the highway.”

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Homeless by Lowman S. Henry

Arlen Specter may be without a political home.

Ronald Reagan once observed that “a recession is when your neighbor loses his job; a depression is when you lose your job.” U.S. Senator Arlen Specter said recently we are on the “brink of a depression.” Perhaps that is because he may be about to lose his job.

For months it appeared Pennsylvania’s senior U.S. Senator would cruise to easy re-nomination and likely re-election. The only candidate capable of defeating him in the primary, former Congressman Pat Toomey was busy with plans to run for governor. Democrats appeared to be without any big name candidates, certainly none with statewide appeal.

Then came the Economic Recovery and Reinvestment Act, more commonly known as the stimulus bill. It proposed the biggest expansion of government spending in U.S. history. Worse, much of the spending had little to do with stimulating the economy and much to do with expanding the social agenda of a newly minted liberal Democratic President.

Fractious Republicans in Congress united in opposition to the stimulus package. Every Republican in the House and all but three in the Senate voted against the bill. Arlen Specter was one of the three. His vote for the Obama stimulus plan ignited a firestorm of protest at the grassroots of the Republican Party. Specter’s apostasy caused Toomey to rethink his plans, and now he appears likely to challenge Specter in next year’s Republican Primary.

All of this has turned Specter into a politically homeless person. His vote for the pork-laden stimulus package has made him persona non grata in the Republican Party. Even the national GOP Chairman, Michael Steele, has suggested the party might back someone else in the primary. This has given rise to speculation that Specter might switch parties and run as a Democrat, but there is little reason to believe he would be welcome there.

Specter has always been vulnerable within the ranks of the GOP. He came within a whisker of losing to Pat Toomey in the Republican Primary five years ago. Much has changed since then, all to Toomey’s advantage. After leaving Congress, Toomey went on to head the national Club for Growth, helping to elect conservatives to both the

U.S. House and the U.S. Senate. He has become one of the most prolific fundraisers in Washington.

Last year, over a quarter million Republicans – mostly so-called moderates – left the party to support Barack Obama. Those were Specter voters, and they aren’t coming back. Thus, the Republican Party is even more conservative now than it was five years ago, when Specter eeked out a 17,000 vote win over Toomey.

Sensing Specter is among the walking dead as a Republican, many pundits are predicting he will switch parties and run for re-election next year as a Democrat. But, Specter remains anathema to the Democratic Party’s dominant left wing activists who remember his brutal handling of Anita Hill during Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas’ confirmation hearings.

Specter had done an amazing job over the years straddling the ideological fence. The problem is those who sit on a fence usually end up getting shot at by both sides, and that is what is happening today. Conservatives in the GOP will grind him up over the stimulus; liberals in the Democratic Party will oppose him because of Hill and the votes he has cast over the years to try and appease Republican conservatives. His best chance might actually be to take a page from Connecticut Senator Joe Lieberman’s play book and run as an independent.

And, Specter’s biggest test of all lies ahead: his vote on the deceptively-named American Free Choice Act, or Card Check. A vote in favor of allowing Card Check to go to the floor of the U.S. Senate would seal his fate within the GOP. Business groups would make Specter public enemy number one. The combination of an enraged conservative base and a vengeful business community would make it impossible for Specter to win an election for dog catcher in the GOP. A vote against Card Check would animate the labor unions, whose support Specter has always had, and doom him in the General Election.

All of this leaves Arlen Specter without a political home. And, after a career in the U.S. Senate of nearly three decades, his next stop could be the retirement home.

Lowman S. Henry is Chairman & CEO of the Lincoln Institute & host of the weekly Lincoln Radio Journal

Did You Know?

As you walk up the steps to the building which houses the U.S. Supreme Court you can see near the top of the building a row of the world's law givers and each one is facing one in the middle who is facing forward with a full frontal view ... it is Moses and he is holding the Ten Commandments!



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