



## How Happy Can 2012 Be?

It will indeed be a happy new year if we manage to remove Barack Hussein Obama from the presidency in November. Then we shall all be happy (the exact degree of happiness being dependent on exactly who replaces Obama and how much his policies differ from the Obama agenda), except those citizens who want more government, more taxes, more regulation, more federal handouts, more debt, and more unemployed leisure. Those people will not be happy until all Americans are reduced to equal numbing poverty.



If you've managed to survive with most of your wealth intact, you are one of the lucky ones, or more likely you are one of the smart ones who continued to earn an income and knew what to do with your assets. But judging from the number of foreclosures that are still taking place, a persistent unemployment rate of over eight percent, increased inflation making the almighty dollar worth less, more people on food stamps, and more business bankruptcies, it would seem that the American people have been fleeced by a government spending trillions of dollars it doesn't have. Some of it can't even be accounted for. No one in or out of government can control what happens to three trillion dollars.

How could the richest, most productive, and inventive nation on earth be reduced to this kind of economic disaster? It's our politicians in Washington and some state capitals, unionized government employees, and ideological socialists who have done it. It's our progressive public educators, who have deliberately dumbed down our nation and turned millions of Americans into functional illiterates, who have done it. And they've used government force to bring it all upon us. That is why I distrust government, including government schools, and that is why the Founding Fathers contrived a form of government that would or could interfere as little as possible in our private lives and do as little damage as possible to the economy. Yet, even they knew that sinful man would work overtime to find a way to get around the Constitution.

The first American President to call for getting rid of the obstacles that the Constitution placed before great men who wanted to do great things was Newt Gingrich's favorite President, Theodore Roosevelt. He is also John McCain's favorite president. In his famous speech at Osawatomie, Kansas, in 1910, Roosevelt criticized our form of government because it prevented a dynamic leader from imposing his great liberal, statist reforms over the entire nation. He said:

The American people are right in demanding that new Nationalism without which we cannot hope to deal with new problems. The new Nationalism puts the National need before sectional or personal advantage. It is impatient of the utter confusion that results from local legislatures attempting to treat National issues as local issues. It is still more impatient of the impotence which springs from over-division of governmental powers, the impotence which makes it possible for local selfishness or for legal cunning, hired by wealthy special interests, to bring National activities to a deadlock. This new Nationalism regards the executive power as the steward of



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public welfare. It demands of the judiciary that it shall be interested primarily in human welfare rather than in property, just as it demands that the representative body shall represent all the people rather than any one class or section of the people...

I believe in shaping the ends of government to protect property as well as human welfare. Normally...the ends are the same, but whenever the alternative must be faced I am for men and not for property.

Roosevelt called his philosophy of government, in which the executive becomes "the steward of public welfare," the New Nationalism. Leaders such as he were frustrated by "the impotence which springs from over-division of governmental powers." Those "over-divisions" of governmental powers had been deliberately contrived by the Founding Fathers to prevent potential dictators such as Roosevelt from taking power. Indeed, he tried to turn the Republican Party into an instrument of his New Nationalism. But when it was rejected at the Republican National Convention, he created the progressive Bull Moose Party and ran against the conservative Republican nominee William Howard Taft.

By dividing the Republicans in the 1912 election, Roosevelt enabled the ultra-liberal Democrat Woodrow Wilson to win the election. Wilson had won by only 41.8 percent of the vote. But it was enough to bring a real progressive into the White House, which then gave us an income tax, the Federal Reserve System, our entry into World War I, and a Wilsonian foreign policy. And it was all Roosevelt's doing.

Ever since then, the federal government has grown like a cancer. After Wilson, we got two conservative presidents, Harding (1921-23) and Coolidge (1923-29). Warren G. Harding was a self-made newspaper publisher who rejected the progressivism that had dominated Congress since Roosevelt. He believed in a strong economy independent of foreign influence. In the 1920 election, he and his running mate, Calvin Coolidge, defeated Democrat and fellow Ohioan James M. Cox, in the largest presidential popular vote landslide in American history (60.36 percent to 34.19 percent) since first recorded in 1824. It was a clear indication that the American people had not been taken in by the Progressive philosophy of Roosevelt and Wilson.

In foreign affairs, Harding spurned the League of Nations, which had been set up by the internationalists who wanted the United States to become permanently involved in international affairs. He signed a separate peace treaty with Germany and Austria, formally ending World War I. In August 1923, President Harding suddenly collapsed and died during a stop in California on a return trip from Alaska. He was succeeded by Vice President Calvin Coolidge.

Coolidge was a true believer in the doctrine of small government. A Republican lawyer from Vermont, Coolidge worked his way up the ladder of Massachusetts state politics, eventually becoming Governor. His conduct during the Boston Police Strike of 1919 gave him a national reputation as a man of decisive action.

Coolidge restored public confidence in the White House after the scandals of his predecessor's administration, and left office with considerable popularity. As a Coolidge biographer put it, "He embodied the spirit and hopes of the middle class, could interpret their longings and express their opinions. That he did represent the genius of the average is the most convincing proof of his strength." As a believer in laissez-faire economics, Coolidge once said, "The business of America is business." Today, he would be the perfect Tea Party candidate, espousing the very doctrines of freedom and small government advocated by the Founding Fathers. Americans would have to wait until Ronald Reagan



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became President before they would hear from the White House the kind of ideas Coolidge would have approved of.

After Coolidge, who declined to run for another full term, it was Herbert Hoover who became President (1929-1933). Hoover was originally a professional mining engineer and author. As the U.S. Secretary of Commerce in the 1920s under Presidents Harding and Coolidge, he promoted partnerships between government and business under the rubric "economic modernization." As we have learned by now, such partnerships are deadly to economic freedom. They become incubators of corruption.

Hoover also believed in the Efficiency Movement, which held that the government and the economy were riddled with inefficiency and waste, and could be improved by experts who could identify the problems and solve them. When the Wall Street Crash of 1929 struck less than eight months after he took office, Hoover tried to combat the ensuing recession with volunteer efforts, public works projects such as the Hoover Dam, tariffs such as the Smoot-Hawley Tariff, an increase in the top tax bracket from 25 percent to 63 percent, and increases in corporate taxes.

Obviously, raising taxes in a recession did not help the nation recover from its economic downturn. Nor was his belief in government-business partnerships in keeping with the doctrine of laissez-faire that Coolidge espoused. The recession didn't turn into the Great Depression until liberal Democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt became President in 1934. Under Roosevelt, socialists and communists infiltrated a growing federal government promoting socialist programs which kept the Great Depression going until our entry into World War II, which put Americans at work building the greatest war machine in the history of mankind.

We needn't go further into history in any detail. All one need know is that no President since FDR has governed under the constraints of the Constitution. With the exception of Reagan (1981-1989), they've all governed as if the Constitution were just an inconvenience to be gotten around, and even Reagan's best efforts fell short of ideal constitutional government. Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, G.H.W. Bush, Clinton, G.W. Bush, and B.H. Obama all increased the number of agencies, bureaucrats, and regulations in the federal government. Under their governance, the Internal Revenue Service has grown into a monster collection agency harassing our citizens. Laissez-faire economics is considered evil. And the national debt has grown so large that it may bankrupt the nation. And as a member of the United Nations we are so deeply involved in foreign conflicts that our military is stretched to the limits.

So, can anything we do really change things that much in 2012? The Republican candidates in all of the debates expressed their wish to reduce the size of government, promote fiscal responsibility, get rid of some federal departments and agencies, and reduce our commitments overseas. It may not get rid of the cancer that is eating away at our constitutional Republic, but maybe we can stop it from growing and killing us.

Meanwhile, may you, faithful reader, have a blessed and prosperous new year!



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