



## How to Survive in Obama's Economy

Like many of my fellow Americans, I have been forced to economize and become more of a bargain hunter than I was in the happy days of go-go prosperity. Having been brought up in the great Depression, I still pick up pennies, and I have always loved a bargain, but now more than ever. So now when I receive three colorful supermarket circulars in the mail each week, I examine them closely to see where the bargains are.



We have one supermarket chain in this area of Massachusetts that has the best overall prices. Yes, even some of their prices have gone up, but they've been able to maintain low prices for some essential items. For example, milk. They sell a half-gallon for \$1.59, while other markets charge over \$2.00. I expect their price will go up one of these days, but so far so good.

Staples has been offering low prices on a number of utilitarian and back-to-school items. For example, the other day I picked up a packet of four scouring pads for one dollar. They come in bright primary colors and are excellent on dishes and pots and pans. You can use them until they fall apart, which takes awhile. They are easy on the hands. And, of course, they are made in China and distributed by a firm in Simi Valley, California. Why we can't make them in the U.S. puzzles me.

Which brings me to the whole issue of Chinese imports. The simple truth is that many Americans today would not be able to make ends meet without cheap Chinese products, especially for the kids. Staples has also been selling one-subject notebooks made in Brazil and Egypt for thirty-three cents each. Who can resist such bargains? In other words, the big retail stores are adapting to the present economic doldrums by offering the public stuff they can afford to buy. They are being creative in order to stay in business.

Much of the merchandise in our stores is made in China, and that is why they are becoming so rich with dollars, which they then use to buy our treasury paper. The only things they buy from us are Boeing passenger planes and other high tech items they don't make yet. But we can expect that they will soon be building Boeing aircraft in China.

The Chinese would also like to buy more American lumber, but the Fed has placed restrictions on tree-cutting in the Northwest, as if trees were not a renewable resource. Meanwhile, the Obama administration is trying to prevent Boeing from operating a plant in South Carolina because it is a right-to-work state. The Obama administration is so beholden to the labor unions, that they will deliberately sabotage business growth and jobs to please the union bosses.

Prices of virtually everything are going up. But they are also going down, if you take sales as an indicator. Merchants are cutting prices in order to encourage consumer spending. Because some of our



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big food processors want to keep their production lines moving, they have to have periodic sales to clear the shelves and make room for more product. That's where today's bargains are to be found. But you can't live on bargains alone.

So far, California, despite restrictions placed on farmers by the federal government, has been able to continue providing the nation with fresh, wholesome fruits and vegetables at affordable prices. It is reassuring to know that the spirit of inventiveness still exists in American agriculture. The strawberries, cantaloupes, and grapes are better and sweeter than ever.

There are also these Dollar Stores in which every item sells for One Dollar. Surplus production is what makes these stores able to buy brand products at a lower price. Their managers are the most efficient bargain hunters in the country today. They scour the world for products they can sell for a dollar and make a profit. But even they are having problems finding bargains as the cost of everything keeps going up because the value of the dollar keeps going down.

And what is Obama's solution to all of this? Apply Alinsky economics: take from the haves and give it to the have nots. Tax the rich so that he can spend more money supposedly to create more jobs. What kind of jobs? Mainly unionized government jobs, like hiring 30,000 more teachers who don't know how to teach children to read. Obama also talks a lot about building roads and bridges. I thought they were supposed to be doing that with the stimulus money they previously spent on these shovel-ready jobs. But Obama recently revealed, with a laugh, that there weren't as many shovel-ready jobs as they thought. So what did the government spend that money on? Is there any way of finding out?

The only people who can easily afford to live in Obama's economy are the bureaucrats in Washington, and especially those in the White House. Mr. Obama and family can spend three weeks on Martha's Vineyard having a blast, while a lot of Americans are going to the Dollar Stores. It is said that Metropolitan Washington is the most prosperous area in the country. I wonder why.

Governments do not and cannot create wealth. They can only forcibly take it from those who have it. That is pure and simple theft. Many middle-aged Americans have spent their working years accumulating small fortunes, which they nurse very carefully in preparation for the sunset years. There is a small army of predators who make a career out of trying to separate these people from their money. But the biggest predator of all is the federal government, which has become so huge that it takes several trillions of dollars to feed it. And Obama wants to make it a lot bigger with Obamacare and other federal programs. That is why there is no talk of cutting anything and reducing the cost of government. There is only talk of raising more money through higher taxes. Take from the haves and give a little bit of it to the have nots, and spend the rest on trying to make America into a gigantic Cuba.

There are also criminal predators who would like to separate the U.S. government from some of its trillions. Apparently, the group that ran the now-bankrupt Solyndra company was able to take the government for a half-billion dollars with the help of our President who pretended that he knew more about business than a Harvard MBA. That was quite a heist for a group who knew how to play Obama like a barroom piano. We know that the money was used to build a gleaming state-of-the-art plant to produce solar panels. But how much did management siphon off for themselves? Five million, ten million? Out of 500 million, who would miss it?

We need to start talking seriously about cutting the size of government. If I had my way, I would reduce the federal government to what it was before Lyndon Johnson launched his Great Society programs that were supposed to solve all of our social problems. The War on Poverty was part of that misguided leap toward utopia, and the result is that there is more poverty today in the U.S. than ever before. But we



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never end failed programs, despite the fact that they are a waste of money. We just keep propping them up like dead bodies in a Hitchcock movie.

Take the Department of Education. The most recent SAT scores indicate that our public schools are still dumbing down the students and producing more functional illiteracy among Americans than ever. Yet, the politicians continue to support an education establishment which is committed to this dumbing down curriculum and has no intention of giving Americans what they want: academic excellence. The public is easily fooled by calling such programs “No Child Left Behind” or “Race to the Top.” But according to the latest SAT scores, most children have been left behind and the race to the top is landing too many of them at the bottom.

Here’s a novel bit of forgotten history: President Andrew Jackson got rid of the public debt by selling off national land. The U.S. government owns millions of acres of land in the western part of this country. But instead of selling a million acres of it to pay off some of our trillions of dollars of debt, the government is buying more land to conserve for endangered species. And for that we need higher taxes!

The only way to cut the cost of government — the big monkey on America’s back — is to get rid of the many agencies and departments that do nothing but spend money and write regulations. But so far all the talk in the debates is about what to do with Social Security. None of them, except Ron Paul, have emphasized the need to reduce the size of government. Even Mitt Romney doesn’t talk of cutting anything. He only wants to make every liberal program more effective. And that is why he will not win the Republican nomination in August 2012.



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