

Give Me Back My Money, I'll Make Something Happen

By Bob Banov and Roger Ohlsen
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Something politicians seem to avoid considering and that tonight's "State of The Union Address" brings to mind is that the funds our politicians are using to run our country, pay themselves salaries and buy their health insurance is money that is ours, and they shouldn't be using it to pay themselves salaries unless they earn them first. That's far more basic than any take some may have on the advantage they think they get from the Citizen's United decision.

In fact, when you consider it, the government *has* no money to spend, unless it gets it from somewhere or somebody outside of government—meaning us. So, in essence, their funding and their salaries are entirely on loan to them, interest free, and they obtain every penny they disperse from their coffers from *we, the people*.

This is why when our representatives mismanage that money and leave us trillions in debt, their posturing about what they're willing to spend on us afterwards—particularly as regards entitlements we have already paid for—and their desperate search for supporters who agree with their contradictory remedies, flies in the face of reality. Most of us know that we've got to behave responsibly and we learn we have to spend responsibly pretty damn early in life.

In as succinct terms as possible, look at it this way: we basically pay taxes to put the government in business so they can provide the services we have agreed we need and that they should provide to us. That's supposed to make them employees, or let's say public servants. That's public service.

It is essentially little different than our investing our money with them, so they spend it on us to protect us from harm. Our investment with them is also meant to facilitate our abiding by our Constitution, which promises it is only appropriate that we have the right to be free to pursue happiness, which is considered to be a God-given right.

Now, according to Ben Franklin, the U.S. Constitution “doesn’t guarantee happiness, only the right to pursue it. You have to catch up with it yourself.” And, of course, that’s bound to cost money, which, in turn, requires prudence in spending. That is something we know our founding fathers considered in framing this most revered document long before there were such entities as corporations.

So, where does this discussion lead? Perhaps we need first to realize that people who enjoy going to meetings tend to be people who use them as a subterfuge for not doing anything, or in other words, for collecting wages for inactivity. An employer simply does not pay his employees for wasting time, any more than an investor is willing to remain invested in a company that does not accomplish its stated purpose, that of increasing the revenues of those who invest in its future, or as in the case of government, fulfilling its promises to its invested electorate.

You can argue tax policy until you’re blue (or even green) in the face, as well as income inequality. But the first step in the successful development of a government, besides finding an even-handed way it can govern fairly, is for it to find a way to govern itself without greed, corruption and selfishness. And in lieu of such a government, it’s up to us to *demand* our representatives develop standards they take seriously themselves, until they show us they can function responsibly and responsively—but as adult members of the human species, and not like kids on an allowance.

If our president and honest conservatives continue to demand this, so must we. “And no,” as Steve Jobs said, “we don’t know where it will lead. We just know there’s something much bigger than any of us here.”