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Mitt Romney Goes Big: Rebuilding His Vacation Home

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Mitt Romney has a plan for stimulating the economy. A very personal plan. He's [renovating](#)^[3] his \$12 million beachside home in California. He says hearing the waves crash is important to him. Maybe their hypnotic sound drowns out any political difficulties he encounters. Anyway, Romney is apparently going to quadruple the size of his La Jolla home. For serenity and beauty it is certainly hard to beat La Jolla.

The *San Diego Union-Tribune* reports that

Romney has filed an application with the city to bulldoze his 3,009-square-foot, single-story home at 311 Dunemere Dr. and replace it with a two-story, 11,062-square-foot structure. No date has been set to consider the proposed coastal-development and site-development permits, which must be approved by the city.

Here's the question: if Romney really thinks that he's going to be moving into the White House in 2013, would he be engaging in a massive home renewal project? Perhaps it's a sign of confidence—a compound big enough to shield him from scrutiny when he goes on vacation. Still, he's spending lavishly at a time of national impecuniosity. It's hard to imagine Texas Gov. Rick Perry making the same mistake.

Perry is actually talking about tearing down the government—at least in his book *Fed Up!*, which appeared in 2010. Now his detractors are pointing to his calls to abolish Social Security and the income tax. And Doug Bandow is pointing to Perry's foreign-policy stands, calling them deeply neoconservative.

But does Perry really believe much of what he espouses? George W. Bush said he would practice humility in 2008. Bill Clinton ended up slashing welfare. Barack Obama has continued many Bush-administration policies in the war on terror. The safer counsel may be to presume that a president will execute the very opposite policies that he championed during the campaign.

Of course in Romney's case that would require discerning what his stands actually are. So far, he's been mum, preferring to let the other candidates eviscerate each other. But at least Romney knows that if he doesn't get the nod, he can return to listen to the waves in his new house, though he apparently won't begin construction while he is a presidential candidate.

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