

“America must be a light to the world, not just a missile.” — Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.)

The real American Express: the government

BY ADAM ONDO

This past Saturday, I attended the Republican Rally on campus. The rally was replete with refreshments/American flags and great candidates. Of those candidates, one really impressed me with his speech.

His name was Joe DioGuardi. As a CPA (Certified Public Accountant) that had been in Congress during President Reagan's second term, DioGuardi was our lone, but well-qualified, senatorial candidate at the rally. Halfway through his speech, he pulled out his Congressional voting card. He held up the card and said, “My friends, take a good look at this card. This is the most expensive credit card in the world.” He was right — the government increases the national debt without ever being held accountable.

After the rally had ended, I conversed with Mr. DioGuardi about reckless spending at the federal level and his time in office under Reagan.

As he was leaving, he invited me and a few others back to his RV, where he gave us copies of his recently revised book,

“Unaccountable Congress: It Doesn't Add Up.”

I read the book as soon as I returned to my dorm room. It exposed the true extent of the national deficit, which is \$56 trillion if Medicare and Social Security debts are included. That means each of us owes \$569,330 because of the irresponsible spending of 535 individuals. It also illuminated the problems with Congressional budgeting, spending and accounting, touching on issues such as health care and Social Security.

DioGuardi's book allows the average citizen to see through the “smoke and mirrors” of the appropriations process. “Unaccountable Congress” does an excellent job underscoring the contemptible Congressional budgeting processes and inadequately designed bailouts.

However, I would like to focus on a matter mentioned in passing in chapter

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six, “A House of Ill Repute,” that is plaguing every level of government; personal spending. Spending on personal luxuries has become a pastime of Congress members to whom DioGuardi refers to “spendaholics.” Nancy Pelosi is the latest culprit of this wasteful spending. Pelosi has spent over \$2 million of taxpayers' dollars in the past two years just on travel expenses for her and her family.

Thousands of dollars were spent on her expensive friends Jack Daniels and Johnny Walker. Fine dining also accounted for tens of thousands of tax dollars. This wasteful spending needs to stop.

Now, there may not be a company to cut Congress's line of credit, but we the people can monitor its spending. DioGuardi's organization, Truth in Government, exposes the poor budgeting and spending practices prevalent in Congress. The organization's website, www.

truthingovernment.org, is constantly being updated with the latest news and information concerning fiscal issues.

The information shows why Social Security reform, which has been ignored for too long, is imperative and why repealing Obama's healthcare bill should be of a high priority.

If Congress continues to increase the national debt at the rate it has, China will soon overtake us as the No. 1 superpower.

The threat that China poses is great, as their economy is irrefutably more stable than — and arguably as powerful as — ours. Social Security will be non-existent. Taxes will have to be increased to keep up with defense spending. The hazardous spending needs to stop.

It is our job as citizens to pressure the lawmakers in Congress, to rein in the monstrous budget we are facing.

If we don't, the deficit will indisputably have terribly adverse results on future generations, including our own.

Ondo is a member of the class of 2014.

Separation of federal government and state

BY STANTON YUWONO

Think about it: Would one federal department be more efficient at telling Americans how to get the best possible education? Or would dealing with education on a state, local or even personal level get the job done just as well, if not substantially better? How would an all-powerful “mastermind” know what works best for Lorain, Ohio or the kids of Coweta, Ga. when it comes to education? Education should be left in the hands of local governments.

It all comes down to three main points. First, the Department of Education has been a financial burden on the U.S. Second, we should move toward competition and public choice. Third, the priority should be focused on getting higher quality education for all.

All of this can be done by moving toward the direction of privatization. Although complete privatization of education is politically absurd, some mechanism ought to be put in place to

allow competition to occur (perhaps public choice, the voucher system, etc.).

Additionally, problems that arise from schools should be addressed at local levels, whether that be through local officials or parents themselves.

Aside from several exceptions here and there, historically, the public school system does not have a strong record — we all know that.

The Department of Education was intended to give all children a good shot at a solid education regardless of where they live, but that hasn't been the case. Draining more and more money every year to fund inefficient practices is unproductive.

Cutting spending in general should always

How would an all powerful ‘mastermind’ know what's best for Lorain, Ohio?

be a priority and getting rid of inefficient bureaucracy is one way of doing so. A report by the Cato Institute estimates that during three General Accounting Office audits, the department reported losing \$450 million, consecutively. The Department of Education spends \$2 trillion annually, (\$25,000 per student), and America's students are still not doing well. Why should we put up with it? More money does not always mean better quality.

In essence, we need competition, not rigid, planned education. Parents and families, whether rich, poor or middle class, know what's best for their children — and who doesn't want their kids to have the best possible education?

If we just allow some sort of voucher system (which, by the way, President Obama got rid of in Washington D.C.) or some other mechanism to allow choice and competition, we can ensure that the best possible education will be out there and available to everyone, because only then will individuals have the freedom to pick what's best for them.

If we look at all the successful educational systems found internationally, we see a common trend — they tend to give parents some degree of choice and schools themselves are not shackled by government mandates. It all boils down to one principle: choice.

By allowing privatization or, at the very least, some choice in education free from the government monopolies, not only will quality go up, but high quality education will be accessible for everyone.

Yuwono is a member of the class of 2014.

The proof is in the pudding: 2010 is not 1934

BY MATTHEW DAWIDOWICZ

The Republicans have won back the House of Representatives in this election, and the Democratic majority in the Senate is so narrow that nothing will get done. It is important to know why this occurred.

Conservatives will say it was a referendum on President Obama and a huge rejection of his “big government” philosophy. Many liberals will say it was because of the GOP's messaging and ability to get voters to vote against their own interest — and that if only the Democrats fought back, they would win every election forever.

Both these claims are wrong — sure, they may have some grain of truth to them, but the idea that ideological platitudes and a better “message” determines 100 percent of elections is false.

As we can see in the outcome of this election, the state of the economy blindly determines almost all election results. Campaigning and messaging do close to nothing.

A political scientist skilled in studies of voting behavior could have predicted the results of this election almost five months ago, before campaigns started and candidates were chosen.

Obviously, unpredictable events can change an outlook, like the Christine O'Donnell debacle in Delaware, but that is extremely rare.

Still, the myths on both sides persist, and sometimes create themselves when they don't have to.

A good example is the year 1934. The country was recovering from the Great Depression and, in the midterm that year, Democrats picked up seats in both houses, solidifying their very large (but incohesive) majority.

Many liberal bloggers take this event as some sort of magical fable. Usually, the non-presidential party loses seats in Congress in the first midterm, and it's been that way since the Civil War.

There are exceptions, but they're rare and can be explained by atypical events. As there is no explanation here, Demo-

crats have gotten their history wrong.

They say that because of FDR's superior messaging, his ability to “connect” with voters and the lack of Fox News, the “right-wing hate machine” as they call it, the Democrats won seats when they would have normally lost them.

In their mind, the moral of this story is fight for the people, don't let your opponents smear you and you win big.

However, this is a story that only reinforces their beliefs with unproven assumptions rather than actual facts. The reality was much more complex, but still easily explained.

FDR's rhetoric may have sounded good, but the reality was that he had many centrist tendencies and did not originally support many parts of the New Deal. But the Democrats still won in 1934.

Democrat bloggers say it is because the voters knew they did not want to give control of the country back to the Republicans after the economy crashed under them. And then they lament that the voters today are likely to give the

GOP power, even though they, again, wrecked the economy.

They say that voters are dumber than they used to be, all because of Fox News. All their misconceptions of voting seem to blend into one in that scenario.


But there's one very important part they left out: In 1934 the economy was growing steadily, and disposable income was greatly improving.

It certainly wasn't as high as before the stock market crash, but it was getting much better and voters supported the people in charge at that time because of the general mood — things were in fact getting better.

If the economy had been stagnant, the country would have wanted FDR out of office as quickly as possible and no “connecting” would have saved him.

Sure, the people who wrecked the economy would be back in charge, but the voters wouldn't care — a seesaw two-party system works that way.

Dawidowicz is a member of the class of 2012.



Would the University benefit from holding a cultural fair?

Heck yes!	46%
Not Really	37%
Maybe	17%

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Next week's question:
How do you feel about the Republican midterm election victories?