



Sequester fairy tales abound thanks to Obama's scare tactics

By: Ken Braun – March 4, 2013

The threat of cutting the pay of the politicians' janitors is what's supposed to worry us into spending that extra \$85 billion, Mr. President? Really? THIS is your example of an expense that the republic cannot survive without?

I'll raise you that sequester and say we don't need Capitol janitors at all. Instead, Michigan's Congressional delegation and their staffers should be mopping floors and tidying up toilets on Capitol Hill. I want to see that every day, from now on, until I die, on C-SPAN.

Over at the Washington Post, the campus newsletter of Big Government, they don't share my twisted fantasies about politicians polishing potties. They poked around and found out that there was no such plan to cut the pay of Capitol Building janitors.

So this good news, sold to me as bad news, turns out to be fake news fabricated by the White House. One wonders: If budget cuts were to permanently shut down the White House press briefing room, would the nation be any less informed?

This wasn't even the only let-down in that news conference. The President promised just a few weeks earlier that the sequester cuts would be "harsh" and would "devastate" government programs. But after getting my hopes up, he then backtracked when the big day arrived: The cuts were "not going to be an apocalypse," he said, "just dumb."

Well, on that point we agree. With a \$16.5 trillion debt weighing us down, scaling back the flow of red ink by just \$85 billion is like snipping \$85 off a \$16,500 credit card balance and patting yourself on the back for frugal progress. Nope: It's "just dumb" to mention that trivial total.

However, budget hyperbole is a bipartisan affair. Some on the Right didn't get the memo that Hurricane Sequester had been downgraded to Tropical Storm Squirt Gun.

Before sequester, it was announced that the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency was preparing for it by releasing from custody low-risk illegal aliens being detained primarily because they aren't supposed to be here in the first place, rather than any real harm they were expected to do. In other words, most were probably here for jobs, perhaps even as janitors!

Unfortunately, the Homeland Security secretary hinted at the theoretical risks in releasing some of these people. Of course, releasing anybody from custody, harmless or not, poses more risks than keeping them locked up: We'd all be safer by locking up Congress, for example.

But the ICE story predictably incited panic from some Congresscritters on the Right. Then the Cato Institute exposed the truth: The ICE cutbacks leave us with 5,000 border patrol agents, the same number we had in 2007, and today's staffing is SIX TIMES larger than it was in 1986.

<Yawn>

What scares me most is that Nancy Pelosi will forget to clean the sink.