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We Work for the government

And we just want to help...ourselves.

By Jack Kelly – June 23rd, 2013

Hello. We're from the government. We're here to take lots of your money -- about a third more than we took in 1985 -- and to boss you around. We can say you can't build on your own property without our permission. You must buy health insurance if we tell you to.

Federal spending has risen 23 percent since the recession began and median household income has fallen. We're richer. You're poorer. But to pamper ourselves at lavish conferences, give bonuses to IRS executives who harass conservatives and pay for the president's entourage during his vacations, we must have more.

You whine that government programs rarely deliver what we promised and cost more than we said.

So what? When a major study in Oregon concluded the \$450 billion spent annually on Medicaid "generated no significant improvement in measured physical health outcomes," hardly anyone in Washington got upset. Or even noticed.

We measure success not by whether a program works, but by how many administer it and how much we are paid. Compared to you, we're paid a lot. Our compensation packages on average are roughly double those of workers in the private sector.

The Department of Health and Human Services found that by the end of the first grade, there was essentially no difference between children who attended the Head Start program and kids who didn't, so some of you said Head Start is a failure. For us it is a success, because after the report came out, the president, citing longer term benefits, raised funding for Head Start from \$6.8 billion to \$9.2 billion.

The federal government spent about \$670 billion last year on 126 programs to alleviate poverty, according to a Cato Institute study -- nearly \$15,000 for each officially poor man, woman and child. Since the poverty line for a family of three was \$18,530, that should have been enough to wipe out poverty more than twice over. But the poverty rate is now the highest it's been since 1965.

This is mostly because people who aren't poor are eligible for many programs. But it isn't for the benefit of the poor we have 126 different programs. Much of what is spent goes to us, the middlemen.

We've spent more than twice as much on the "War on Poverty" as on all of America's real wars combined, according to Robert Rector of the Heritage Foundation, but the poverty rate isn't much below what it was when we started. Hardly anybody in Washington frets about that. When we double down on failure, our jobs are secure.

Think carefully before you complain. Each day we collect 1.7 billion electronic records on you and other Americans. We could be reading your emails, monitoring your telephone calls and tracking your credit card purchases.

We didn't want you to find out about this. But since that snitch Edward Snowden has let the cat out of the bag, we want you to know we do it only for your protection.

However, if you're thinking of saying or doing something we wouldn't like, remember Catherine Englebrecht. She's the Houston businesswoman who had the nerve to start a group to fight vote fraud. She says we've audited her personal income tax returns twice, the tax returns of her business twice. She says the machine shop she and her husband own has had visits from OSHA and ATF.

And the FBI has made six anti-terrorism inquiries. Since the FBI apparently doesn't surveil radical mosques such as the one attended by the Boston Marathon bombers, this scrutiny of a suburban mom might seem excessive. But little is more terrifying to our friends in Congress than an honest vote count.

If you think you have nothing to hide, think again. There are now at least 3,000 different federal crimes and so many regulations that publishing them all takes up nearly 40 feet of shelf space.

John Baker, a retired Louisiana State University law professor, tried to count the number of new federal crimes created just in the last few years.

"There is no one in the United States over the age of 18 who cannot be indicted for some federal crime," he concluded.

If you harbor quaint 19th-century notions such as "innocent until proven guilty," "equal justice under law" or "government of the people, by the people, for the people," our little chat may be upsetting. So we'll conclude it with some humor.

How's this for a joke? We're called "public servants."