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## NUGENT: War on poverty is over - we lost

Nearly 50 years and \$15 trillion later, the poor are still poor

By [Ted Nugent](#) | The Washington Times | Monday, April 23, 2012

Here's a painful yet inescapable statement of the obvious to people with common sense and a lick of reality: Poor people are poor because they make poor decisions. That's the root cause of poverty.

Now, with the Obama money-burning orgy in full swing, America herself is financially poor because, according to the Cato Institute, American taxpayers have been conned into spending \$15 trillion since 1965 on President [Lyndon Johnson](#)'s brownie-point "war to eliminate poverty."

The results have been pathetically poor. The percentage of poor people in 1965 was roughly the same percentage of poor people in America today, but a staggering \$15 trillion has been wasted.

Since 1965, we have fought the war on poverty with all the wrong generals, all the wrong tactics and all the wrong weapons. And it's costing us \$1 trillion a year to continue to lose this war.

What our \$15 trillion has bought us is institutional and generational poverty. Reward bad decisions and bad decisions increase. Ya think?

Like all conservatives, I want to and I do help poor Americans. I don't wish to condemn them to a life of poverty, which is one of the driving political platforms of the [Democratic Party](#).

If our goal is to win the war on poverty, it's time we changed tactics. Instead of setting another trillion dollars on fire this year, I recommend we slam the financial door shut on pouring more hard-earned money after more bad money with guaranteed despicable results.

Here's another blazing statement of the obvious: Poor people will quit being poor when our government quits enabling, bribing, training and rewarding them to be poor. Write that down.

People can and will do amazing things when Fedzilla removes its heavy bureaucratic boot off of their throats.

It's really quite simple. The road from poverty to the middle class is paved with good decisions, willpower, a kick-butt work ethic and an alarm clock. That's the recipe for wealth and glorious independence.

The very first thing that needs to be done to eliminate poverty is to stop punishing the producers and expand economic freedom. You don't need to be an economist or a greasy guitar player to understand that punishing the wealthy ultimately hurts poor Americans. The Obama administration's plan: Tax the wealthy even more and increase the incentive for the poor to remain poor. Are you kidding me?

Economic freedom means freedom from burdensome government regulations and policies that strangle the life out of small businesses and the free market. This administration is addicted to more anti-business regulations and more control, which ultimately exacerbates poverty. Who could not possibly know this?

We've got to quit stabbing ourselves in the eye with an ice pick and then complain we can't see.

While we desperately need to eliminate the vast controls over economic freedom on the wealthy, we also need to eliminate the government poverty programs that enable and encourage people to be poor instead of encouraging them to be free, independent, self-reliant people.

Government causes poverty because it enables poor people to continue to make poor decisions. If we want to win the war on poverty, we've first got to win the war against Fedzilla, which intentionally causes poverty and causes American taxpayers to set fire to a trillion dollars a year.

Fedzilla does all the wrong things right. It's time to reverse course and demand our government do all the right things right.

All good things start with more freedom. We will only eliminate poverty when we embrace more freedom.

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