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When Government Goes Insane

Alan Caruba

I have this theory that every so often [governments](#) go insane. Usually they have someone who is already demented heading up the government, but it takes a majority of the elected body to enact crazy laws and it takes the government apparatchiks to engineer the systemic failures, the wars, and the crazed rush off the cliff.

The [election](#) of 2008 is a splendid example of this. The majority of voters elected a man with the thinnest possible resume for the job of President. Indeed, the man has refused to release his birth records to reassure voters he met the minimum, Constitutional standards for the job. The man, however, was a skilled orator, able to give voice to the TelePrompter speeches written for him by master manipulators.

Promising “change,” promising a government free of “lobbyists,” promising “transparency,” and generally promising a new dawn of enlightened government, Barack Obama and his majority in [Congress](#) arrived on January 20, 2009 and promptly began to bankrupt the nation, deprive Americans of access to its vast energy resources, and seek to impose an insane law predicated on the belief that carbon dioxide, vital to all life on Earth, was a “pollutant” that had to be reduced and, of course, heavily taxed.

Capping all this madness was a naïve effort to establish improved relations with the spawning ground for terrorism around the world, the Middle East. He is determined to change the fanaticism that have spawned Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda, the Taliban, and decades of Islamofascist terrorism from Bali to London, Manhattan and Madrid, to Mumbai.

And it has taken barely four months to get to this point.

In the President’s own words during a C-Span interview, “We’re out of money.”

A recent Cato Institute Tax & Budget Bulletin by Chris Edwards, its director of tax policy studies, spells it out.

“Federal spending is growing by leaps and bounds,” wrote Edwards. “The budget hit \$3.9 trillion this year, double the level of spending just eight years ago.”

“The government is also increasing the scope of its activities, intervening in many areas that used to be left to state and [local governments](#), businesses, charities, and individuals.”

To clarify what is occurring, it is necessary to know that the U.S. Constitution expressly forbids the government from bailing out individuals or private industry. Such bailouts violate the Equal Protection doctrine that forbids the government from selecting who shall receive the bailout and who shall not.

Moreover, it violates the General Welfare clause because such bailouts benefit a small group and not the general public. Finally, it violates that Due Process Clause because it interferes with contracts that have already been entered into and, lastly, they turn the public treasury into a public trough.

This new administration, however, has given the union virtual ownership of Chrysler and is likely to do the same with General Motors if the courts do not intervene. The losers are those who lent money to them under contractual terms that put them first in line to be compensated, but who have been left out in the cold along with their fiduciary responsibilities to their investors.

“In recent years,” wrote Edwards, “the range of federal control over society has widened as [politicians](#) of both parties have supported nationalizing many formerly state, local, and private activities.” This has led States in particular to spend well beyond the taxes they collected because they counted on the federal redistribution of funds to make up the difference. In the process, they gave up control over their education, healthcare, and transportation systems to name a few.

Edwards cited the *Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance*, a 2,205-page official compilation of all federal aid or subsidy programs, including grants, loans, insurance, [scholarships](#), and other types of benefits.

“There has been a large increase in the number of agricultural programs due to bloated farm bills passed in 2002 and 2008. There have also been large increases in the number of [homeland security](#) and justice programs, which subsidize local activities such as firefighting and policing. While those are important activities,” said Edwards, “it would be more efficient if they were funded locally because Congress often steers such funds to projects of dubious quality and little national security relevance.”

The Founding Fathers fashioned a central, [federal government](#) with specific limitations on what it could or could not do. Most of these have been violated since the last century’s increasing governmental intrusion and acquisition of centralized power.

“It is very sad that a nation founded on individualism and limited government,” wrote Edwards, “has more people than ever suckling at the federal subsidy teat.”

“President Barack Obama has proposed a wide range of new subsidies in energy, health care, and other areas. If enacted, they would take America further away from the individual reliance, voluntary charity, and entrepreneurialism that made it so prosperous in the first place.”

We should not be living in an America where the unions own the corporations, where the banks are not free to determine their own prudent loan principles, where local schools are governed from Washington, D.C., where the kind and size of automobile you drive is decided upon by politicians and bureaucrats, and where we are denied the energy we need based on false accusations about “dirty” fuels that are, in fact, the life’s blood of the economy.

Much of what the government is doing and proposing to do is patently insane. It is most surely unconstitutional.

Visit the official site of the July 4th “Tea Parties” that will be held to protest what is being done to our nation at <http://www.teapartyday.com>.

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