

Stop Me Before I Tax Again

If Shakespeare's 'Julius Caesar' were re-staged in Richmond, Virginia today, the imperious Senators would still do the bloody murder. But, the victim would be the body politic, not the body of the great Caesar. The unkindest cuts would be from the Republican Senators who vote, again, to raise taxes. Each one of them is a Brutus to faithful Republicans. The Senators run about crying, "Reliable, sustainable revenue!", instead of "Peace, freedom, and liberty". Actually, these RINOs should say, "Stop me before I tax again."

As our Ides of March approach, the same Republican Senators who voted for the largest tax hike in 400 years of Virginia history are getting ready to do it again. In '04 they cried and caterwauled that essential services and infrastructure needed 'investments' with higher taxes. Much to their utter, clueless amazement, the growing economy produced more than the 8.2% increase needed to pay for all the new spending – before the taxes even began. So, the RINO tax hike created a \$1.2 billion tax surplus. Yet, pride doth not admit error, so they'll spend every penny of the surplus and demand more from the plebians to 'invest' (more taxes) in transportation. This time it's another \$1 billion a year in the first four years.

But, what of all these billions and per cents the Senators pontificate and posture upon? Senatorial oratory, like Brutus' eulogy, calls names – free lunch, flat earth, gnats, extremists, etc. Yet, there is a truth to be spoken, like Antony's eulogy to what these taxes mean. And there's a reason why Virginia's Antony would mock today's senators worse than the Wall Street Journal just did. That truth is in the Harvard Alumni magazine (Jan-Feb 2006) article, "The Middle Class on the Precipice". Coincidentally, Harvard's motto, 'Veritas', is Latin for 'truth.'

The article compares the average American family in the 1970s to 2004. The same average family makes more money but has less to spend freely at the end of the month. In fact the average family, 50th percentile – median, has \$800 less a year (\$66.67 @ month less). The numbers tell this tale worthy of the Bard.

The average family, two parents and two kids, in the 1970s made \$41,670.00 adjusted to today's dollars. There was one wage earner in the family. The average family, two parents and two kids, in 2004 made \$73,770.00 in current dollars. So, where did the money go?

The per cent of money spent on food, clothing, and major appliances when down. The cost of entertainment (including computers), housing and health insurance went up. Others washed out, like more on pets and less on tobacco. But the loss of money for personal choices, economic freedom, wasn't this losing balance sheet. It was taxes.

Harvard Magazine blithely commented that the rate of taxation, from all sources, increased from 24% to only 30%. Stop the presses. Do the math. If the tax rate – that progressive tax from the Communist Manifesto – instead had stayed at 24% - the average family would have \$4426.20 more of their own money, which they earned, today.

Let's see it again. 24% of \$73,770.00 is \$17,824.80. 30% of \$73,770.00 is \$22,131.00. That's \$4426.20 lost to taxes – for the same income. That's \$368.85 a month the average family is spending on permanent, reliable, sustainable revenues for vital infrastructure and public services. Uh-huh. Bull. Ask the Virginia family of firefighter married to a teacher with two kids what an extra \$368.85 a month means to them.

The average family's taxes didn't increase to pay the salaries of the teachers and firefighters. Those meager increases were covered and surpassed by inflation. The growth of local, state and federal governments exceeds inflation. In our Commonwealth it means over 100% growth in spending in less than 10 years. RINO Senators and their few lapdogs in the House of Delegates propose more of the same.

These privileged persons, veterans of so many golf and hunting what not trips from lobbyists, can laugh that this tax or that is only the price of a MacDonald's supersize meal. How amusing.

It doesn't matter to working Virginians whether they pay the Heinz 57 taxes in the (truly laughingly called) Virginia Senate Leadership plan from their left or right pocket. Multiple smaller taxes are still paid by the same folks. Working Virginians pay. Every penny is part of the extra \$4426.20 that governments take – just because both parents work harder. What arrogance of power.

The gas tax is going to be increased – wholesale – another 5%. Every penny will be passed on to Virginians at the retail pump. Yet, the RINOs are so cynical they say anyone who doesn't want to pay the taxes, doesn't have to do so. Just keep all your receipts through a whole year and file them on May 1st. They do it knowing how many Virginians won't keep such records and will have to eat the tax.

There's a reason our motto is Sic Semper Tyrannis. It's time to let the petty, wannabe tyrants know to stop before you tax us again. If not now, in 2007, Virginia, in 2007.

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