

Solving the Deficit

I know that Barack Obama puts a great deal of stock in people like Timothy Geithner, Ben Bernanke, Harry Reid and Barney Frank, but they're the folks who helped get us into this financial mess. As usual, it takes an ordinary American such as myself who relies on logic and common sense, not a bunch of pie charts and Keynesian theories, to get this economy moving in the right direction.

I realize that Obama is counting on class warfare to win  re-election, but I'm here to tell him that most Americans won't fall for it. They know that Bush started that jalopy down the hill, but it was Obama who kept pushing it over the cliff or into the ditch or wherever the hell it wound up. As a result, a child of six can see that placing a two or three percent surtax on rich people is just more of the same.

After studying the problem, I am here to report that, as usual, Obama's thinking is small and entirely inside the box. I, on the other hand, have discovered that the solution is well within our grasp. I suspect that the reason that Obama didn't arrive at the obvious answer is that for all his grousing about millionaires and billionaires, in his heart he realizes that most of his friends, not to mention he himself, are members of those two elitist groups. I mean, who else do you think can afford to plunk down \$35,000 to attend one of his fund raisers? When your nearest and dearest include the likes of Jeffrey Immelt, Jon Corzine, the folks at Goldman Sachs and George Soros, you don't want to act too rashly.

I, as you've probably guessed, suffer from no such inhibitions. If you are serious about getting the deficit under control, you can't nibble a little here, a little there, especially not if you wish to keep spending tax dollars like a fleet of drunken sailors, otherwise known as Democrats.

After conducting a little research, I discovered that there are over 400 billionaires in America. Thirty-one of them are worth more than ten billion dollars, 11 of them worth more than 20 billion. Bill Gates tops the list at \$59 billion, followed by Warren Buffet at \$39 billion. I'm sure it's just the cynic in me, but when those two pals get together for lunch, I can't help wondering which of them pretends to have left his wallet in his other jacket.

Most of the people in the billionaires club are fairly anonymous, having come by their fortunes through mining, hedge funds, hotels, the media, banks, construction, computers, sports teams, casinos, supermarkets and real estate. A few of the better known include Meg Whitman, H. Ross Perot, Jerry Jones, Steven Spielberg, Donald Trump, Stephen Bechtel, Ralph Lauren, Michael Milken, Oprah Winfrey, Sam Zell, Steve Wynn, Charles Schwab, George Lucas, Ted Turner, Barry Diller, Mark Zuckerberg, George Kaiser, Michael Bloomberg, David Geffen, three people named Ziff, four people named Hearst, seven people named Pritzker, T. Boone Pickens and a whole bunch of heirs to Walmart and the Mars candy company.

These 400-odd people are worth over 10 trillion dollars. The way I figure it, all we need to do is confiscate all their money and we are nearly 70% of the way to eliminating the national deficit. Frankly, I'm a wee bit surprised that with all the advisors and czars who make up this administration, it took an outsider to come up with this brainstorm. Of course it's just possible that Valerie Jarrett or Van Jones suggested it, but once Obama saw so many of his friends and supporters on the list, he had no option but to nip it in the bud.

It's one thing, after all, to whine constantly about generic millionaires and billionaires not paying their fair share, and quite another when you have to break the news to old chums like Oprah, Bloomberg, Diller, Geffen, Spielberg, Kaiser and Soros, that their future won't be quite as rosy as they had anticipated, and will likely consist of panhandling, food

stamps and homeless shelters.

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