

Another One Who Should Shut Up and Sing

☒ Just this past week, I read an article in which the “Sir Elton John’s AIDS Foundation” raised more than \$500,000 this year at the World Team Tennis annual charitable exhibition. Commendable. But when asked what the federal government should do to encourage more individuals to donate to charities like his, John told CNSNews.com that “government should be doing our job for us” but “they’re not.” He went on to say that the federal government “should be giving money” rather than “giving money to us to give away.”

I’ve got news for Sir Elton. The government doesn’t have its own money to give away. It’s not the government’s money. It’s our money!

And let’s not forgot our thin-skinned cry baby POTUS who said, when heckled at one of his campaign rallies recently, “Let me just say this – these folks have been – you’ve been appearing at every rally we’ve been doing.” “And we’re funding global AIDS. And the other side is not. So I don’t know why you think this is a useful strategy to take.” “I think it would make a lot more sense for you guys to go to the folks who aren’t interested in funding global AIDS and chant at that rally, because we’re trying to focus on figuring out how to finance the things that you want financed, all right?”

Both President Obama and Elton John should check their facts before spouting off about something they obviously know nothing about. Clearly, both are unaware that President Bush, in his State of the Union address in January 2003, announced the creation of PEPFAR, the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, to direct \$15 billion, yes, billion, to places where it’s most needed. PEPFAR was renewed in July 2008 with the intention of spending \$48 billion from 2009 to 2013 on

programs to tackle HIV and AIDS as well as tuberculosis and malaria.

My first question is always, “where in our Constitution does it permit the federal government to give away money?” That question never seems to concern politicians.

Obviously, Elton John doesn't think that \$15 billion and a large part – actually \$39 billion – of the \$48 billion is enough. Instead, he squawks that the federal government should give even more money.

And to our President who loves to use partisan politics, I ask, “who actually is on ‘the other side’ who isn't interested in funding global AIDS?” President Bush – who was on “the other side” presumably because he's a Republican – is the one who created PEPFAR, which spends more taxpayer dollars to combat AIDS than any other President or country for that matter.

So, as usual, the United States is in the forefront of the fight while the rest of the world sits back and expects us to do the heavy lifting. According to Jon Leiden, spokesperson for the Global Fund, there's been a decline in support for the global fight against the AIDS pandemic. According to the Global Fund's figures, the U.S. has pledged \$4 billion dollars over the next three years – a 38% increase over our previous contribution – but apparently \$2 billion short of what AIDS activists have been pushing the Obama administration to deliver. Can you believe this?

To give you even a better idea of what America has pledged in comparison to the rest of the world, France pledged \$1.5 billion, Japan \$800 million, Canada \$528 million, Australia \$203 million, Russia \$60 million and where is China in this mix, you might ask? China pledged a paltry \$14 million, higher only to pledges made by Luxembourg, Nigeria, South Korea, South Africa, Tunisia, Namibia and Kuwait.

Now remember that, with the exception of a relatively few cases, AIDS is the only disease that is totally preventable. Don't share needles and use a condom – simple. Cancer, Multiple Sclerosis, ALS, Lupus, Muscular Dystrophy, Parkinson's – not so simple.

According to the CDC's 2008 figures, out of 41,087 cases of AIDS, only 187 of those resulted from "hemophilia, blood transfusion, perinatal exposure, and risk not reported or not identified." All the rest involved male-to-male sexual contact, heterosexual contact, or injection drug use. What makes me absolutely insane is when I read about men who know the consequences but deliberately engage in unprotected sexual contact for a variety of reasons none of which make any sense to me or should outweigh the risk involved. God forbid anyone actually tells it the way it is. So my question is how much of the billions of dollars is spent to inform people (1) not to share needles and (2) use a condom?

So, Mr. John, until you can answer my questions and tell me why there are so many new cases of AIDS which could've easily been prevented, why not take the advice of Laura Ingraham for a change and just "shut up and sing." Or better yet, because you think "America is an uncomfortable place to be at the moment," why don't you just leave.

I don't get it, but if you do, God bless you.