



Back to the future—again

This month's article is a partial reprint of my December 2010 *Postal Record* article, which I wrote the day after the 2010 mid-term elections. I was very upset at the outcome of those elections because I felt concerned for our future. It is being reprinted to focus our attention on how important this year's elections are.

The 2010 mid-term elections are now history. Hopefully we, as retired letter carriers, public employees and seniors in general will still be allowed to breathe. I say that because if the political pendulum has truly swung toward the "Tea Party," of less taxes on the wealthy and less government, then our benefits and our future can be at risk.

There is a message of untruth being spread in our country that the problems with our economy and the jobless issues can be blamed on the federal government and the overpaid public employees. They have pledged to downsize the federal government and eliminate the overpayment and out-of-line benefits of public workers, which would equate to massive job losses during the highest unemployment period in our nation's recent history.

The problem that I have with most of these individuals is that they stand for nothing. They are against things. They offer no solution to the problems of our country but they instead blame "big government" for all of our ills. While overspending may be a problem, it is not caused by the salaries and benefits being paid to the workers. The overpayments to the Halliburtons of the world are at the very root of the issue. They scream that the actions of the federal government are based upon nothing more than a redistribution of wealth in the country. By taking from the wealthy and giving it to the poor. I would argue that the redistribution of wealth has already been completed in the past 25 years by the elimination of the middle class and the obscene growth of wealth in the top small percentage of our citizens. I believe that the separation of wealth from the haves to the have-nots has never been this great in our country, or at least not since the Great Depression.


I trace this back to the Reagan years, when the agenda was to give the wealthy and businesses huge tax

breaks. Their stated belief was that if you give the tax breaks to the businesses and wealthy, they would invest in expansion and create jobs and prosperity for all. They believed that if you gave the tax breaks to the workers, they would just spend it on washers, dryers, stoves and refrigerators and no growth would occur.

So we gave the breaks to the businesses and they took the money, bought the companies that made washers, dryers, stoves and refrigerators and moved their production out of our country. They then pillaged the company here in the U.S. and then declared bankruptcy. We lost good middle-class jobs and the American middle class took the fall. (Gov. Romney and Bain Capital were leaders in this field.)

This next Congress will have its work cut out for it. One thing that is surely on the radar is Social Security and Medicare. Since most of our retirees have a vested interest in one or both of these programs, we need to stay vigilant when they discuss their plans.

The problems of Social Security and Medicare can be solved without blowing them up, eliminating benefits, privatizing or eliminating them. It is suggested by much smarter men than me that the continued extensions of tax cuts for the very wealthy will cost more money than the identified influx of new money necessary to fix Social Security.

In closing, fast-forward to the 2012 elections and most of the same topics from 2010 are very relevant. Each candidate for office is either in support of the working middle class or against them. I hope that when I wake up on Nov. 7, I will be in a better state of mind. No promises, but my vote is for the security of this country through the protection of our jobs and our way of life. Will yours count? 

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