



How to Pay Off Social Security Debts

Finally, a well-known economist has said something about the Social Security system that no one else has said: sell federal land to pay those who have been taxed for Social Security but want to opt out of the system. Our much admired and respected Walter Williams wrote in his column of October 4, 2012:



Here's what might be a temporary fix: The federal government owns huge quantities of wasting assets — assets that are not producing anything — 650 million acres of land, almost 30 percent of the land area of the United States. In exchange for those who choose to opt out of Social Security and forsake any future claim, why not pay them off with 40 or so acres of land? Doing so would give us breathing room to develop a free choice method to finance retirement.

Great idea! But who in this tottering capitalist system has the ability to understand this simple solution to a pressing problem? Certainly not our socialist president, who believes the federal government ought to own more land, not less. This government land represents a highly valuable asset that no one is using. When a government is at the brink of bankruptcy, it should do what any potential bankrupt does: not borrow more money, but raise cash by selling assets.

President Andrew Jackson paid off the national debt by selling federally owned land. Why hasn't this idea occurred to anyone in Congress? I haven't even heard one of the Republican candidates in any of the debates make this suggestion. And when Obama insisted that we raise the debt ceiling, why didn't the Republicans suggest that selling some of the 650 millions of acres of federal land could pay the bills until a new pro-capitalist government, determined to cut the size and cost of government, takes over in 2013.

Giving unused government land to potentially productive users would certainly boost the economy and might even create jobs. Americans, by and large as individuals, are a highly practical and enterprising people. Most of them know how to make a buck. They are generally honest, hard workers who could make good use of land the government doesn't need or use. That's what happened in the 19th century when homesteaders were given land to cultivate in the vast empty prairies of the West. Today, that area is capable of feeding the world.

Our politicians lack imagination. They also lack a profound understanding of American history, which provides example after example of what a people can do when they have the freedom to do it. There is no lack of ingenuity among Americans. But the ruling class of 545 politicians and the huge bureaucracy they've created has been in the process of enslaving Americans with high taxes and government restraints and regulations, so that ingenuity is no longer enough for the ambitious to create new



thriving enterprises.

Bureaucrats now run the American economy, not entrepreneurs. Bureaucrats spend their time figuring out ways to stymie enterprise, regulate economic activity, and restrain creative business expansion. Many of them are even determined to destroy certain industries, such as coal mining or nuclear power. And the only way to get rid of these meddling bureaucrats is to abolish the departments and agencies that give them the power to control how Americans earn their living. Every one of these bureaus and agencies was created by an act of Congress. So Congress also has the power to get rid of them.

The rulers in Washington who have given us the greatest national debt of any nation in the history of mankind have done so not out of ignorance of simple economics, but out of the perverse wish to destroy freedom and lead us into a utopian world socialist order. And Republicans were just as complicit in this effort as the Democrats. They called it collegiality. We call it betrayal of basic American principles.

When human beings do strange and irrational things, such as create unsustainable debt, there must always be some dishonest, perverse thinking behind it. Freud called it the human death-wish. Freud, the world's inventor of psychoanalysis, had to flee Vienna because he was a Jew and threatened with death by the Nazi German government. And during World War II, the Germans murdered six million of Europe's most productive, enterprising, and intelligent citizens. Why? Because they were productive, enterprising, and intelligent.

Bureaucrats in general hate the productive, enterprising, and intelligent. Why? Because of jealousy. They want to show the economically powerful and creative who actually is the boss, who is really in charge: the government bureaucrat. This may sound like an exaggeration. But who can explain what the Germans did from 1933 to 1945?

One should not assume that America's bureaucrats are satisfied with the power they already have. Obama wants to give them much more power. That is what Obamacare is all about: more bureaucratic power over the lives of everybody. Bureaucracy is the enemy of freedom. Yes, we do need some people in government to run the legitimate functions of government. But no more than that. That is why we agree with Jefferson that the government that governs least governs best.

Can Americans regain that spirit of freedom which the Founding Fathers ignited in the hearts of the patriots who gave us this great nation? The presidential election of 2012 will provide the answer. In 1944, Ludwig von Mises, the great Austrian economist and philosopher, wrote in the preface to his book, *Bureaucracy*:

The main issue in present-day social and political conflicts is whether or not man should give away freedom, private initiative, and individual responsibility and surrender to the guardianship of a gigantic apparatus of compulsion and coercion, the socialist state. Should authoritarian totalitarianism be substituted for individualism and democracy? Should the citizen be transformed into a subject, a subordinate in an all embracing army of conscripted labor, bound to obey unconditionally the orders of his superiors? Should he be deprived of his most precious privilege to choose the means and ends and to shape his own life?

Von Mises may have well been describing what is going in America today. We are on the brink of becoming a socialist society unless the whole process is stopped in November 2012. He writes further: "There is no compromise possible between these two systems. Contrary to a popular fallacy there is no middle way, no third system possible as a pattern of a permanent social order." There is also a passage in his book that describes the kind of idiots who are part of the Day of Rage demonstrations. He writes



Written by [Sam Blumenfeld](#) on October 6, 2011

on page 92:

At the bottom of all this fanatical advocacy of planning and socialism there is often nothing else than the intimate consciousness of one's own inferiority and inefficiency. The man who is aware of his inability to stand competition scorns "this mad competitive system." He who is unfit to serve his fellow citizens wants to rule them.

Von Mises then summarizes his book in two sentences:

Bureaucratization is only a particular feature of socialization. The main matter is: Capitalism or Socialism? Which?

If the majority of Americans don't realize what's at stake in the coming election, then we might as well admit that "the land of the free and home of the brave" will no longer exist. But I hope that enough Americans have learned what must be done in the voting booth if we are to save our capitalist, free-enterprise system.



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