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# The March to Mediocrity

By Curtis Coleman  
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Americans have been and are the most generous and charitable people in the history of this planet. We have been consistently and frequently astonishingly willing to share our wealth, even when we lacked it ourselves.

In August 2005 Hurricane Katrina slammed into Louisiana's Gulf coast, flooding more than 80% of New Orleans and causing the death of more than 1,800 people. While the federal government's failure to respond quickly and adequately was well documented, the national media typically failed to tell the real story about American generosity. The American Red Cross, Southern Baptist Convention, Salvation Army, Oxfam, Common Ground Collective, Emergency Communities, Habitat for Humanity, Catholic Charities, Service International, "A River of Hope" and many other charitable organizations raised US\$4.25 billion in donations to help the victims of the storm.

The Salvation Army's immediate response to Hurricane Katrina included more than 5.7 million hot meals, 8.3 million sandwiches, snacks & drinks. Its SATERN network of amateur radio operators picked up where modern communications left off to help locate more than 25,000 survivors. Salvation Army pastoral care counselors were on hand to comfort the emotional and spiritual needs of 277,000 individuals. As part of the overall effort, Salvation Army officers, employees and volunteers contributed more than 900,000 hours of service.

Lurking in the sometimes lofty appeals of the POLR<sup>1</sup> administration is an overreaching federal government's attempt to deprive us of both our resources and our opportunity to *voluntarily* redistribute our wealth. TARP, cap and trade, health care "reform", the 2009 and 2010 federal budgets – all ultimately more about ideology than the economy, with POLR's unapologetic goal of dramatically narrowing the "gap" between those with the highest levels of income and those with little or no income.

This POLR-izing of America requires the continuing transfer of wealth from those with higher incomes to those at lower levels or no incomes – a process that Americans have historically voluntarily accomplished through

- thousands of charities and non-profit organizations that have been liberally supported by the most generous culture in the history of the world (something which the POLR administration now wants to discourage), and through

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<sup>1</sup>POLR – Rep. Nancy Pelosi, President Barack Obama, Senator Blanche Lincoln, Senator Harry Reid

- outstanding Welfare-to-Work programs administered through faith-based organizations, such as the enormously successful program at The Church at Rock Creek in Little Rock (something else POLR now wants to discourage).

POLR wants to move America's wealth from top to bottom through

- A much more aggressive progressive income tax – which penalizes Americans for being successful
- TARP – which includes a now clearly obvious strategy to control first executive salaries and then all salaries in American's corporations
- Mortgage foreclosure relief, subsidies and “cram down” legislation – which require Americans who have responsibly and successfully managed their budgets to pay for the failures of those who haven't
- New EPA regulations – new fees and taxes which will siphon new levels of income from productive businesses and individuals; POLR plans to distribute these new taxpayer funds to those in lower income levels to offset the inevitable dramatically higher home energy costs that will plague all Americans
- New income tax policies – which will eventually remove the requirement of approximately ½ of Americans to pay income taxes and expand “refunds” to those who have paid no taxes, therefore passing the entire tax burden to the “top” 50% of income-producing of Americans, dramatically increasing the tax burden on America's most productive citizens and removing all incentive for 50% of voters to have any vested interest in controlling the size or cost of government, constituting the most egregious bribe of American voters in history.

The greatest tragedy of the mandated redistribution of wealth is not the inevitable disenfranchisement of America's glorious creative entrepreneurial spirit. It is not that the labors of America's workers are marginalized as their rewards are requisitioned. It is not the liberties lost to those from whom wealth is demanded. The tragic peripeteia of redistributed wealth is the liberty forever lost to those to whom the wealth is redirected. It is that those recipients become forever enslaved to the redistributors. That those who govern subjugate those whom they endow is invariably confirmed in history.

President Gerald Ford warned us that "A government big enough to give you everything you want, is strong enough to take everything you have."

One of my (now deceased) mentors summed this up most succinctly:

- You cannot legislate the poor into freedom by legislating the wealthy out of freedom.

- What one person receives without working for, another person must work for without receiving.
- The government cannot give to anybody anything that the government does not first take from somebody else.
- When half of the people get the idea that they do not have to work because the other half is going to take care of them, and when the other half gets the idea that it does no good to work because somebody else is going to get what they work for, that my dear friend, is about the end of any nation.

In 1787 the Scottish history professor Alexander Tyler wrote:

"A democracy is always temporary in nature; it simply cannot exist as a permanent form of government. A democracy will continue to exist up until the time that voters discover that they can vote themselves generous gifts from the public treasury. From that moment on, the majority always votes for the candidates who promise the most benefits from the public treasury, with the result that every democracy will finally collapse due to loose fiscal policy, which is always followed by a dictatorship.

"Great nations rise and fall. The people go from bondage to spiritual truth, to great courage, from courage to liberty, from liberty to abundance, from abundance to selfishness, from selfishness to complacency, from complacency to apathy, from apathy to dependence, from dependence back again to bondage."

Can we break this catastrophic cycle or are we doomed to the ruinous repetition of history even in our own lifetimes? If anyone can change the course that has so miserably failed in so many other countries – it's Americans.

Let us stand up and be just that – Americans! We reject this disemboweling of the American dream, this disenfranchisement of the American spirit, this sinister March to Mediocrity.

