

# How Do We Pay For Those Cut Programs?

By William Raspberry

WASHINGTON—This is to notify you that we have shipped the car you ordered. In order to reduce the weight and thereby lower your shipping costs, we have removed the wheels. You'll find them in the trunk.

It's an old joke, but the Reagan administration is about to give it new life with its latest tax shenanigans.

You know, of course, that the administration has reduced federal income taxes. The idea, we have been told since last year's election campaign, is to let you keep more of the money you earn, so that you will invest it, or put it into savings accounts, thereby stimulating economic growth.

It's a wonderful idea, in theory, especially if you keep your mind focused on waste and fraud in the federal government. But as Rep. Elliott H. Levitas (D-Ga.) pointed out during recent congressional hearings, not all federal programs are wasteful or fraudulent. How, he asked, do we pay for those efficiently operated, necessary programs that are going to be affected by the cut in federal taxes?

The answer, delivered by Interior Secretary James Watt, who had been sent over to Capitol Hill to speak for the administration, was a model of cynical simplicity: You increase local taxes.

Levitas, with the innocence of the small boy remarking on the emperor's sartorial inadequacies, confessed that he couldn't see how reducing federal taxes would free up money for investments if the savings had to be made up by increasing local taxes.

"The fellow who pays federal tax is the same fellow who pays property taxes," he pointed out.

It is such an obvious point that one might have assumed that Watt had misspoken himself. But then, as if to prove otherwise, Norman Ture, undersecretary of Treasury, suggested that the states increase their taxes to offset the federal tax cuts.

Asked if such an increase wouldn't subvert the president's economic recovery plan, which relies on a federal tax cut to free up money for savings and investment, Ture acknowledged that it would. States, he suggested, "aren't compelled to work with the federal government."

Levitas is still scratching his head. "I have always supported the concept behind the 'new federalism' approach, that is, the concept of turning power and

authority back to our state and local governments," the Georgian said.

"However, the concept of 'new federalism' as proposed by this administration is something quite different....It seems that what the administration means by 'new federalism' is simply turning the financial burdens of government over to the state and local governments. This means nothing more than the state and local governments would be forced to raise taxes without additional resources. I find it hard to believe that a president who came into office on the promise of

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providing real tax relief for the American people would support such a plan. But that is the case."

Ture, the Treasury Department's leading tax expert, made it explicit. Speaking at a meeting of the president's Advisory Committee of Federalism, whose members represent state and local governments, Ture supported Reagan's proposed 12 percent reduction in revenue-sharing grants to the cities. It is up to the cities to decide whether they want to continue to operate the existing programs, he said. If they do, they'll have to pay for them.

And where would the money come from? Ture said the 25 percent tax cut (through fiscal 1984) would amount to a "turnback" of an average of \$2.2 billion per state and suggested that state and local governments should look to that "turnback" as a source of new taxes.

But, of course, there is no "turnback". As administration officials never tire of pointing out, the government has no presumptive right to the earnings of the American people. By that reasoning, the reduction in federal taxes

## War From Page 4

agents "honest," since they know they have to go by the book or lose their case in court. But it does more than that, too. It protects all citizens from arbitrary police behavior, it increases respect for the law, and it removes incentives for law enforcement officials to abuse their power.

Weakening the exclusionary rule will not add to the conviction rate. Despite a handful of publicized, extreme cases, few people have escaped a guilty verdict because of it. Again, this is an instance where a precious constitutional right should not be compromised to satisfy a purely rhetorical "Get-tough" stance.

All the talk about building more prisons and drilling holes in the constitutional safety net avoids the real issue of attacking the causes of crime.

A society that has full

employment, equal opportunities, decent education and housing for all, and eliminates discrimination will be a society that is relatively crime-free.

## Negro From Page 4

I can see it now - on all the front pages. Flash!! Homemade electronic Negro makes good! It would be like a dream come true! What would I name him? "Thomas Sowell, of course!"

I love him, and presidential counsel Edwin Meese would simply go ape. And why not? My electronic Negro wouldn't eat much and all you'd have to do is pull his plug if he talked out of turn. Kinda like what they did to Andrew Young and what they're planning to do to Samuel Pierce.

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## NAOMI'S VIEW

Poise is a very important factor concerning life in general, when it is lost, getting it back is a problem. Strength and power come from within; they are qualities that can never be forgotten.

Avoid anything that saps the strength of your spirit, it may take a good while practicing, eventually you will win. A sleepless night will certainly interfere with tomorrow's chores; phone gossip will tear you to pieces; reading articles that create fear is hard on your nerves, so...

"Shun people who twitter and shake and wobble in their minds. Shun books that create doubt and fear. Shun entertainment that robs you of sleep, of hope, and of courage under the guise of realism. Shun people who worry endlessly, and ask our Supreme being to strengthen you more and more; cultivate the people who believe in and practice moral standards."

All of us need courage, and it is manifested by the way we meet our problems we face daily. Strength and power will enable us to rise to heights when we confront emergencies, and the real test comes in our ability to carry on in spite. It is hope that gives us strength to pursue the way marked out for us, and people who make progress cultivate the forward look.

Possession of poise enables us to control our thinking and organize our acting. The basic principle of thinking affirmatively - never negatively - is what determines success and satisfaction in every phase of our lives.

Seemingly, it is good for us to be made aware from time to time of our human limitations, and, of course, we are facing dangers from without and dangers from within, therefore, unless we hold solid ground as to poise - we have lost sweetness concerning life. It takes power and strength to hold fast, plus faith and hope which are true values of life.

## Candid Shots From Page 4

the Statler Brothers? The poor man sits there, trying his darndest to look straight-faced while a brother pops on the bus with Curtis Blow rapping about "The Breaks" on his Kawazuki 1000.

Talk about breaks. I scanned the letters section of a later Ebony to see what kind of readership reaction was elicited by the article, which incidentally was entitled "Take Your Music with You". The one letter which appeared must have been from the man who likes Dolly Parton. "I am positively appalled and outraged that Ebony would sink so low as not only (to)



Naomi C. McLean

approve of but actually encourage such utterly dumb, stupid and inane waste of time and money," wrote Eugene Griffin of Philadelphia. "Black youths should be urged to carry books, not radios."

Although I'm not as hard-nosed about the matter, I have enough headaches as it is. If a youth wishes to invest in a portable radio or tape player, fine. I only ask that the fast-talking salesman (you know, the ones who turn up the bass everytime a black walks into the store) sell his customer an accessory to go along with his box. It is called an earphone.

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