**I Don’t Have Much Use for Government**

**By Kevin Horrigan Apr 15, 2012**

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I'm sick of it. Whatever happened to personal freedom? Whatever happened to personal responsibility? I want that government should just go away  Except for the garbage men. I love throwing stuff away. I want that to continue. I pay $11 a month for it, and that doesn't cover all the costs, so I want government to pay for the rest. Forget recyclables. I don't remember that the Founding Fathers said anything about recycling. Once the trash gets picked up, government should leave me alone.  Well, maybe a few cops can stay on my street. And the firehouse in my neighborhood should stay open. And if my street gets a hole in it, government should fix it. And keep the stoplights going, but synchronize them so I don't have to wait at red lights.  Bad guys should continue to go to jail, so we'll have to keep judges, sheriffs, jailers, prosecutors, public defenders, probation officers and so forth. But that's it. Now leave me alone.  But that's local government. Having just written a check to the Internal Revenue Service, the big thing I want to go away is the federal government. Luckily, the Congressional Budget Office estimates that by 2050, the Republican budget resolution that passed the U.S. House would eliminate the money for everything the federal government does except Social Security, health care and national defense.  I'm OK with that, except for meat inspection. That pink slime stuff is gross. I don't want trichinosis or E. coli. Agriculture inspectors can stay, because I've read about this mysterious, oozing foam that sometimes causes hog barns to explode.  I don't know any hog farmers and mostly I don't care what happens to other people, but getting blown up in a giant hog foam explosion is just too awful a way to die. I guess I'm just a softie. Except for the hog barn thing, government can stay out of my junk.  Fine, air traffic control can stay. I don't fly much any more, but some people I like have to fly, and I'd hate to lose them. I suppose we should keep some security at the gates, too. But that's it. After that, government should butt out.  I guess we need to save veterans' benefits, particularly because we'll need a lot of soldiers to use all the weapons the Republicans' defense budget will pay for. But no swanky golf courses and private jets for generals and admirals. No more weapons for stopping the Soviet Union.  Have I got everything covered?  Farm subsidies, out. Roads and bridges that I don't drive on, out. Pell grants? Don't need 'em. Out. Small business loans? Don't have a small business. Out. Mine Safety and Health Administration? Four words: Magic of the Marketplace. Miners won't want to work in unsafe mines, so owners will have to fix 'em up. Q.E.D. Same thing with OSHA. Guys won't want to work in unsafe places, so companies naturally will spend the extra money to attract workers.  In fact, we probably can do away with all the regulatory agencies, except for the exploding-hog-barn guys. Do you really think that in a magic marketplace, airlines would cut corners on maintenance? And banks — do you think they'd rip off their customers when they know the bank down the street is playing fair? Don't you understand human nature?  I'm tired of hearing about the so-called safety net. Food stamps, for example. The monthly food stamp allotment in Missouri is $127. Some restaurants, you can spend that much on a single meal, especially if you get a halfway decent bottle of wine. At $127 a month, if you eat three meals a day, that works out to about $1.40 per meal. Is anyone really going to miss a buck-forty? You can find that much in the sofa cushions. Don't have a sofa? Find one on a curb somewhere, whiner.  Homeland security? I'm torn. I hate terrorists, but the Department of Homeland Security budget this year is $59.7 billion, which is an awful lot of money to spend on the off chance that a terrorist will attack me. I'm willing to take the risk. Newspapers, radio, TV and the Internet are full of weather, so we don't need the National Weather Service. Federal disaster assistance? I don't live in a mobile home or on the Gulf Coast. NASA? Private enterprise can go to the moon. Federal prisons and courts? Because we won't have the FBI to arrest people, we won't have to worry about them. Clean air? You want clean air, visit a national park. Just don't expect any park rangers.  Justice Holmes said taxes are the price we pay for a civilized society. By 2050, that won't be a problem. |
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