

Mr. Obama,

Given the uproar about the simple question asked you by Joe the plumber, and the persecution that has been heaped on him because he dared to question you, I find myself motivated to say a few things to you myself. While Joe aspires to start a business someday, I already have started not one, but 4 businesses. But first, let me introduce myself. You can call me "Cory the well driller". I am a 54 year old high school graduate. I didn't go to college like you, I was too ready to go "conquer the world" when I finished high school. 25 years ago at age 29, I started my own water well drilling business at a time when the economy here in East Texas was in a tailspin from the crash of the early 80's oil boom. I didn't get any help from the government, nor did I look for any. I borrowed what I could from my sister, my uncle, and even the pawn shop and managed to scrape together a homemade drill rig and a few tools to do my first job. My businesses did not start as a result of privilege. They are the result of my personal drive, personal ambition, self discipline, self reliance, and a determination to treat my customers fairly. From the very start my business provided one other (than myself) East Texan a full time job. I couldn't afford a backhoe the first few years (something every well drilling business had), so I and my helper had to dig the mud pits that are necessary for each and every job with hand shovels. I had to use my 10 year old, 1/2 ton pickup truck for my water tank truck (normally a job for at least a 2 ton truck).

A year and a half after I started the business, I scraped together a 20% down payment to get a modest bank loan and bought a (28 year) old, worn out, slightly bigger drilling rig to allow me to drill the deeper water wells in my area. I spent the next few years drilling wells with the rig while simultaneously rebuilding it between jobs. Through these years I never knew from one month to the next if I would have any work or be able to pay the bills. I got behind on my income taxes one year, and spent the next two years paying that back (with penalty and interest) while keeping up with ongoing taxes. I got behind on my water well supply bill 2 different years (way behind the second time... \$80,000.00), and spent over a year paying it back (each time) while continuing to pay for ongoing supplies C.O.D.. Of course, the personal stress endured through these experiences and years is hard to measure. I do have a stent in my heart now to memorialize it all.

I spent the next 10 years developing the reputation for being the most competent and most honest water well driller in East Texas. 2 years along the way, I hired another full time employee for the drilling business so that we could provide full time water well pump service as well as the well drilling. Also, 3 years along the path, I bought a water well screen service machine from a friend, starting business # 2. 5 years later I made a business loan for \$100,000.00 to build a new, higher production, computer controlled screen service machine. I had designed the machine myself, and it didn't work out for 3 years so I had to make the loan payments without the benefit of any added income from the new

machine. No government program was there to help me with the payments, or to help me sleep at night as I lay awake wondering how I would solve my machine problems or pay my bills. Finally, after 3 years, I got the screen machine working properly, and that provided another full time job for an East Texan in the screen service business.

2 years after that, I made another business loan, this time for \$250,000.00, to buy another used drilling rig and all the support equipment needed to run another, larger, drill rig. This provided another 2 full time jobs for East Texans. Again, I spent a couple of years not knowing if I had made a smart move, or a move that would bankrupt me. For the third time in 13 years, I had placed everything I owned on the line, risking everything, in order to build a business.

A couple of years into this, I came up with a bright idea for a new kind of mud pump, a fundamentally necessary pump used on water well drill rigs. I spent my entire life savings to date (just \$30,000.00), building a prototype of the pump and took it to the national water well convention to show it off. Customers immediately started coming out of the woodworks to buy the pumps, but there was a problem. I had depleted my assets making the prototype, and nobody would make me a business loan to start production of the new pumps. With several deposits for pump orders in hand, and nowhere to go, I finally started applying for as many credit card as I could find and took cash withdrawals on these cards to the tune of over \$150,000.00 (including modest loans from my dear sister and brother), to get this 3rd business going.

Yes, once again, I had everything hanging over the line in an effort to start another business. I had never manufactured anything, and I had to design and bring into production a complex hydraulic machine from an untested prototype to a reliable production model (in six months). How many nights I lay awake wondering if I had just made the paramount mistake of my life I cannot tell you, but there were plenty. I managed to get the pumps into production, which immediately created another 2 full time jobs in East Texas. Some of the models in the first year suffered from quality issues due to the poor workmanship of one of my key suppliers, so I and an employee (another East Texan employed) had to drive across the country to repair customers' pumps, practically from coast to coast. I stood behind the product, and made payments to all the credit cards that had financed me (and my brother and sister). I spent the next 5 years improving and refining the product, building a reputation for the pump and the company, working to get the pump into drill rig manufacturers' product lines, and paying back credit cards. During all this time I continued to manage a growing water well business that was now operating 3 drill rig crews, and 2 well service crews. Also, the screen service business continued to grow. No government programs were there to help me, Mr. Obama, but that's ok, I didn't expect any, nor did I want any. I was too busy fighting to make success happen to sit around waiting for the government to help me.

Now, we have been manufacturing the mud pumps for 7 years, my combined businesses employ 32 full time employees, and distribute \$5,000,000.00 annually through the local economy. Now, just 4 months ago I borrowed \$1,254,000.00, purchasing computer controlled machining equipment to start my 4th business, a production machine shop. The machine shop will serve the mud pump company so that we can better manufacture our pumps that are being shipped worldwide.

Of course, the machine shop will also do work for outside companies as well.

This has already produced 2 more full time jobs, and 2 more should develop out of it in the next few months. This should work out, but if it doesn't it will be because you, and the other professional politicians like yourself, will have destroyed our countrys' (and the world) economy with your meddling with mortgage loan programs through your liberal manipulation and intimidation of loaning institutions to make sure that unqualified borrowers could get mortgages.

You see, at the very time when I couldn't get a business loan to get my mud pumps into production, you were working with Acorn and the Community Reinvestment Act programs to make sure that unqualified borrowers could buy homes with no down payment, and even no credit or worse yet, bad credit. Even the infamous, liberal, Ninja loans (No Income, No Job or Assets). While these unqualified borrowers were enjoying unrealistically low interest rates, I was paying 22% to 24% interest on the credit cards that I had used to provide me the funds for the mud pump business that has created jobs for more East Texans.

It's funny, because after 25 years of turning almost every dime of extra money back into my businesses to grow them, it has been only in the last two years that I have finally made enough money to be able to put a little away for retirement, and now the value of that has dropped 40% because of the policies you and your ilk have perpetrated on our country.

You see, Mr. Obama, I'm the guy you intend to raise taxes on. I'm the guy who has spent 25 years toiling and sweating, fretting and fighting, stressing and risking, to build a business and get ahead. I'm the guy who has been on the very edge of bankruptcy more than a dozen times over the last 25 years, and all the while creating more and more jobs for East Texans who didn't want to take a risk, and would not demand from themselves what I have demanded from myself. I'm the guy you characterize as "the Americans who can afford it the most" that you believe should be taxed **more** to provide income redistribution "to spread the wealth" to those who have never toiled, sweated, fretted, fought, stressed, or risked anything. You want to characterize me as someone who has enjoyed a life of privilege and who needs to pay a higher percentage of my income than those who have bought into your entitlement culture. I resent you, Mr. Obama, as I resent all who want to use class warfare as a tool to advance their political career. What's worse, each year more Americans buy into your liberal entitlement culture, and turn to the government for their hope of a better life instead of themselves. Liberals are succeeding through more than 40 years of collaborative effort between the predominant liberal media, and liberal indoctrination programs in the public school systems across our land.

What is so terribly sad about this is this. America was made great by people who embraced the one-time American culture of self reliance, self motivation, self determination, self discipline, personal betterment, hard work, risk taking. A culture built around the concept that success was in reach of every able bodied American who would strive for it. Each year that less Americans embrace that culture, we **all descend together**. We descend down the socialist path that has brought country after country ultimately to bitter and unremarkable states. If you and your liberal comrades in the media and school systems would spend **half** as much effort cultivating a culture of can-do across America as you do cultivating your entitlement culture, we could see Americans at large embracing the conviction that they *can* elevate themselves through personal betterment, personal achievement, and self reliance. You see, when people embrace such ideals, they act on them. When people act on such ideals, they succeed. All of America could find herself elevating instead of deteriorating. But that would eliminate the need for liberal politicians, wouldn't it, Mr. Obama? The country would not need you if the country was convinced that problem solving was best left with individuals instead of the government. You and all your liberal comrades have got a vested interested in creating a dependent class in our country. It is the very business of liberals to create an ever expanding dependence on government. What's remarkable is that you, who have never produced a job in your life, are going to tax me to take *more of my* money and give it to people who wouldn't need my money if they would get off their entitlement mentality asses and apply themselves at work, demand more from themselves, and quit looking to liberal politicians to raise their station in life.

You see, I know because I've had them work for me before. Hundreds of them over these 25 years. People who simply **will not** show up to work on time. People who just **will not** work 5 days in a week, much less, 6 days. People always looking for a way to put less effort out. People who actually tell me that they would do more if I just would **first** pay them more. People who take off work to sit in government offices to apply to get free government handouts (gee, I wonder how things would have turned out for them if they had spent that time earning money and pleasing their employer?). You see, all of this comes from your entitlement mentality culture.

Oh, I know you will say I am uncompassionate. Sorry, Mr. Obama, wrong again. You see, I've seen what the average percentage of your income has been given to charities over the years of 2000 to 2004 (ignoring the years you started running for office - can you pronounce "politically motivated"), you averaged **less than 1%** annually. And your running mate, Joe Biden, averaged **less than ¼%** of his annual income in charitable contributions over the last **10 years**. Like so many liberals, the two of you want to give to the needy, just as long as it is someone else's money you are giving to them. I won't say what I have given to charities over the last 25 years, but the percentage is several times more than you and Joe Biden... **combined** (don't you just *hate* goggle?). Tell me again how you feel my pain.

In short, Mr. Obama, your political philosophies represent everything that is wrong with our country. You represent the culture of government dependence instead of self reliance; Entitlement mentality instead of personal achievement; Penalization of the successful to reward the unmotivated; Political correctness instead of open mindedness and open debate. If you are successful, you may preside over the final transformation of America from being the greatest and most self-reliant culture on earth, to just another country of whiners and wimps, who sit around looking to the government to solve their problems. Like all of western Europe. All countries on the decline. All countries that, because of liberal socialistic mentalities, have a little less to offer mankind every year.

God help us...

Cory Miller

just a ordinary, extraordinary American, the way a lot of Americans used to be.