

## Dependency stifles success, innovation 1:38 AM, Aug. 29, 2012

In reading the full transcript of President Obama's Roanoke, Va., comments, you will see the light regarding the truth and intent of his speech as expressed in this in-context excerpt: "If you were successful, somebody along the line gave you some help. There was a great teacher somewhere in your life. Somebody helped to create this unbelievable American system that we have that allowed you to thrive. Somebody invested in roads and bridges. If you've got a business, you didn't build that. Somebody else made that happen. The Internet didn't get invented on its own. Government research created the Internet so that all the companies could make money off the Internet."

To rebut critics of this "out-of-context" statement, *Advertiser* columnist Vanzetta McPherson recently opined that we should not be offended about "acknowledging that our achievements are the sum of our talent, our industry and the contributions of other people and other institutions...unless you believe that individual sovereignty alone determines achievement ... many people believe just that. That belief is the product of the unrealistic, hypocritical meanderings of ingrates who refuse to accredit the environment of achievement created or enhanced by other people and other entities, including government."

According to these in-context vituperations, we are born as unrealistic, hypocritical ingrates who meander through life, and our dreams and aspirations are fraught with failure unless we step into the mainstream of environmental guidance. According to this logic, the oxymoron that arises is that we are environmentally dependent individuals, incapable of building a successful business, achieving a gold medal in an Olympics, or globally enhancing an Internet designed to offset the Cold War — companies making money was not the original design of the Internet.

The logic expressed to this point is an attempt by President Obama, McPherson and many others to redefine what has always been in existence to discredit the work of the individual. The world in which we live (within the normal parameters of sanctity of life and liberty) has always been an existence in which the child is born, grows and matures through environmental systems of education, law, health, roads and bridges, and a host of other holistic functions of our society. There is nothing new here about this process.

However, what is being touted as the new order of things, as defined by Machiavelli, is that achievement is no longer unique to individual citizens of the United States. Rather, achievement is only because of our infrastructure, environmental dependency and reliance upon government. If this is true, then the United States has no great leaders, thinkers, poets, writers, bridge builders, or any original thought or outcomes. Simply put, we are so environmentally dependent on our government that no one has intellectual property rights to anything or copyright to any invention. In other words, it belongs to the collective — much like the Borg of the "Star Trek: Next Generation" series.

I had great teachers, have driven over the Golden Gate Bridge in California, and have interacted with small and large businesses on several occasions. In each case, I — as every other citizen — had the benefit of the systems in place. I learned from my teacher what I needed, but I spent hours in study and practice to accomplish the goal of getting the A in the class, not my teacher. Moreover, the entire class had the same opportunity, but many of my classmates were interested in other things and the grades ranged from A to the environmentally dependent F.

To be told — and, I add, in context — that a business didn't achieve a viable bottom line without the help of the systems in place in the United States is not only an oxymoron, but it truly is an attempt to create dependency on a government that knows best for its citizens. The government is not the saving grace of this nation; it is the people of the nation who build the roads, bridges, and do all those other great things. Government is a servant, not a sole source for which environmental dependency becomes a mandate of existence.

Each and every one of us, without the need to be told, should understand that our educational, military and infrastructural systems offer to every one of us the methods, materials and manpower to achieve as much as we desire. But to be told that we are meandering ingrates because we do not bow down to our government is not only preposterous, but ludicrous.

If this last statement is true, we have become a nation that no longer needs to strive for achievement because someone will take care of us within the environmentally dependent system we have become. If you are looking to invest money in a business or write the next best-selling novel, forget about it. You are a product of your environment, and achievement is not because of your work, long hours studying, or enabling your employees to 'get ahead'; rather, if you simply do nothing, "somebody else (will make) that happen."

Not one of us is an island unto ourselves. We are dependent upon one another for many things in life and for existence. Imagine what would happen if we taxpayers simply decided that we are products of our environmental dependency and we will never be able to satisfy the incessant demand for more and more taxes. We could simply follow the logic that we didn't create the shortage of taxes, "somebody else made that happen."

As noted by President John F. Kennedy, "We are not afraid to entrust the American people with unpleasant facts, foreign ideas, alien philosophies, and competitive values. For a nation that is afraid to let its people judge the truth and falsehood in an open market is a nation that is afraid of its people."

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