

Unintended Consequences

by David Cuddy

Liberals and Conservatives generally want the same things: a better life for their children, safety, a strong economy, jobs, good neighborhoods, excellent education, an improving state and nation. They just go about it in very different ways. For the past 40 years the liberals (Democrat AND Republicans) have been in charge...using bigger government to achieve their goals. The result has been disastrous. Our children do not expect a better life, crime (in Anchorage) is up, the world is not a safe place, our economy is teetering on the edge, my neighborhood, in College Village is no longer a safe place, education is down (many of our high school students can't even handle entry level college classes or qualify for basic jobs), and we all know our state and our nation aren't improving. Half of the population now lives off of government...and that is surely unsustainable. What has big government done to thwart our mutual goals of a better life?

When I was in the Master of Social Work program, I interviewed five people who came to a church to claim a free bag of groceries and \$20. All five began having children before age of 19. None had health insurance, or a career, or a job that could support a family, or a stable marriage. One took AFDC payments and claimed that her career was "having babies," and that the government paid her to do so. Conservatives and Liberals have a shared goal that women and children should not starve, and should have a roof over their heads...but the unintended consequence of these government programs is that families are formed that are dysfunctional, and tend to create children who will cost civilization more money over their lifetime.

Our Mayor wants Anchorage to be the "homeless capital of the world."

Surely no one wants the homeless to starve or freeze to death, but when government offers them all of the services they need to survive, it becomes an entitlement. Add a permanent fund check, and many people can live just fine in Anchorage Alaska as part of the homeless population. A better answer would be to study our homeless population, and create policies that will decrease the number of homeless over time, rather than to throw money at symptoms.

Most of us agree that people should be responsible for their own medical expenses. We also agree, though, that people should not die for lack of coverage, and we agree that the cost is way out of reach for most citizens. "Cost shifting" became the buzz word. "We'll shift the cost to the rich, or to the young, or just subsidize it with government debt and let a future generation deal with it." This is a very bad answer. A better answer is to explore why our medical costs are so high, and work to reduce these costs. A better answer is to help (without government) more families earn enough money so that they won't need subsidized health care.

Crime...we subsidize the creation of dysfunctional families, and then we're shocked when the crime rate goes up. This kid who shot the Carr's employee last week...what is his story? Where did he come from? What was his family life like?

Rural Alaska...we fund 100% of local costs of unorganized boroughs (a current cost), and then, 18 years later (future cost), we have children who can't read, living in a community that has no jobs, living a life of desperation, alcohol, and suicide. Then they move to Anchorage and become a burden to Anchorage taxpayers. Obviously big government advocates think they are doing a good thing with this 100% subsidy, but they ignore the consequence...lower PFD checks, higher urban taxes more

government spending to correct the original problem.

Importation of refugees: We agree that we don't want genocide...or the rape of women, or starvation of masses of people. So we move refugees to the US and to Alaska. The unintended consequence, is the demand for Sharia Law...when enough show up, a loss of our culture, huge social services costs, an increase in crime, and massive increases in education costs. Mountain View, in East Anchorage is called the most "diverse" population in America. One hundred languages and dialects are spoken there. One shudders to think of the cost to Anchorage tax payers for the bilingual teachers. Much as aggressive "vetting" occurs, the children of these refugees are at risk of being radicalized, and staging war on America. In December I was called for jury duty for a young man who was accused of drunk driving. The trial was expected to last one week. Think of the cost of a judge, jury, sergeant at arms, clerk, cost of security, two interpreters (he didn't speak English), a prosecutor, a public defender, and the operations and capital cost of the court room. Since my daughter was killed by a drunk driver, I was excused...so I don't know the result of the trial...but the costs of prosecution and jailing folks is huge. Unintended consequences.

Big government spending advocates believe their spending helps people, creates jobs, stimulates the economy, and increases the population. Let's assume these are all good things. The unintended consequence, is the mess our State finds itself in today. We can no longer subsidize these costs...and cutting spending, or taxing the private sector both will cause major dislocation to our population and our economy...all because we've chosen to wastefully spend public money for decades.