Taking the Right Fork in the Road

by Phyllis Schlafly

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Americans may be tired of an exhausting national campaign, but let's not forget that the stakes have never been higher. As Yogi Berra said, When you come to a fork in the road, take it.

If Barack Obama is reelected, he will merely click the repeat button to give us another dose of his first term, sending us down the road to European socialism, dependency on government, and imposing incredible debt on our children and grandchildren. Taking the fork in the road will give Mitt Romney and a new Republican Senate the opportunity to take us into a new era of rejecting dependency on government.

That's our choice of what kind of America we want for ourselves and our children because it's becoming clearer all the time that Obama's road means a growing percentage of Americans dependent on government for living expenses, housing, medical care, and even food. The Congressional Research Service has just issued a new report that total annual spending on means-tested welfare programs has hit an incredible $1 trillion a year, not including entitlement programs to which people contribute, such as Social Security and Medicare.

There are 83 federal welfare programs that make up this single largest budget item, more than we spend on national defense. In 2011, federal and state welfare spending averaged $61,194 per poor household per year.

Senator Jeff Sessions (R-AL), who ordered the budget figures to be released, said, "No longer should we measure compassion by how much money the government spends, but by how many people we help to rise out of poverty." A major reason to take the right fork in the road is the fact that Obama gutted the welfare reform provision to get people out of poverty when he summarily and unlawfully abolished the successful Work requirement which was required by the law passed by the Republican Congress in 1996 and signed by Bill Clinton.

The biggest increase in welfare spending is for food stamps, which are now feeding 46,681,833, including 1,634,000 non-citizens. Sessions says that the Obama administration has allowed this program to increase mightily through misleading promotion and a disregard for self-reliance.

Foreign policy is another major reason to take the fork in the road. The scandal of the Obama Administration's refusal to defend our U.S. Ambassador in Benghazi, despite desperate appeals to send help, proves that it was a hollow victory to kill Osama bin Laden because his acolytes are alive and still killing Americans.

The pathetic job market is a major reason to take the fork in the road. Obama's much- touted "plan for jobs and middle-class security" is to send two million kids to community colleges. They will be looking for private enterprise jobs that don't exist, and the only new jobs this will cause is hiring more government teachers.

In the last presidential debate, Barack Obama taunted Mitt Romney with this accusation: "Governor, when it comes to our foreign policy, you seem to want to import the foreign policies of the 1980s, just like the social policies of the 1950s and the economic policies of the 1920s."

Some Obama staffer too young to remember any of those years must have given those words to Obama. They make no sense.

The 1980s were actually years of our most successful foreign policy. Those were the Ronald Reagan years when he labeled the USSR the Evil Empire and then won the Cold War (in the famous words of Margaret Thatcher) "without firing a shot" based on our military superiority and his determination to build an anti-missile defense.

The 1950s were the high-water mark for the American nuclear family. Social and economic policies favored it, and no one had to apologize for it. Since then, illegitimate births have increased to 41 percent a year, causing all the taxpayer costs and social problems that result from that unhappy figure.

The 1920s (known as the Roaring Twenties) were years of sustained economic prosperity, industrial and technological progress, and cultural dynamism. Obama, on the other hand, is taking us back to the 1930s, the years of the Great Depression, when the progressives started to falsely tell us that government can solve all our economic problems.

The only question voters need ask themselves in deciding whether to take the fork in the road is: are you and our country better off now than four years ago? For the overwhelming majority of Americans, the answer is a resounding “no.”