



Bluegrass Beacon

BY JIM WATERS

Pigs on parade to the public trough

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The new administration hadn't even arrived in Washington, D.C., for the inauguration before its leadership called for a "new Declaration of Independence."

Of course, such talk demonstrates a startling political naiveté about the intent and purpose of the architect of the first — and only — real Declaration of Independence.

If case you slept through history classes, its author, Thomas Jefferson, warned: "A government big enough to give you everything you want is big enough to take away everything you have."

So before declaring a "new" declaration, it might help if we reacquaint ourselves with the original declaration and its companion document, the U.S. Constitution. Let's start with parts of both that protect an individual's right to fail or succeed based on ability — not on a government bailout.

Big-government types eagerly seek to baptize hard-working taxpayers in the sewage waters of entitlement propaganda while preaching falsehoods such as, "It was government spending that bailed America out of the Great Depression. "

I plan to avoid conversion as long as possible. The farther we wade into that cesspool, the quicker our freedom drowns. But the pack mentality that's taking over Washington, D.C., Frankfort and even city halls across our commonwealth indicate I'm in the minority.

And so I recall a story I heard about a student who asked a professor: "Do you know how to catch wild pigs?"

The prof asked the student for the punch line. The student said it was no

joke.

“You catch wild pigs by finding a suitable place in the woods and putting corn on the ground,” the student said. “The pigs find the corn and come every day to eat for free. When they get used to coming every day, put a fence up on one side of the place where they root. When they get used to the fence, they begin to eat the corn again, and you put up another side of the fence.

“Well, they get used to that and start to eat again. You continue until you have all four sides of the fence up with a gate on the last side. The pigs – hooked on the free corn – come through the gate to eat. Then you slam the gate closed and catch the herd.

“Suddenly, the wild pigs have lost their freedom. They run around inside the fence, but they cannot get out. So, they go back to eating free corn. By now, they are so used to it that they have forgotten how to forage in the wild. In the end, they simply accept captivity.”

Ironically, in the same year that our Constitution was ratified, Scottish professor Alexander Tyler astutely predicted: “A democracy . . . can only exist until the voters discover that they can vote themselves largesse from the public treasury. From that moment on, the majority always votes for the candidates promising the most benefits from the public treasury, with the result that a democracy always collapses over loose fiscal policy.”

The naïve among us – both the politicians and their sheep-like followers – claim that “free corn” such as cigarette-tax increases, public subsidies and government bailouts are not just inevitable but essential.

Of course, feasting on a pile of corn placed on the ground is easier than foraging in the woods.

Easier it may be. Free it is not.

— Jim Waters is the director of policy and communications for the Bluegrass Institute, Kentucky’s free-market think tank. You can reach him at jwaters@freedomkentucky.com. Read previously published columns at www.bipps.org.