



## **Don't like the message? Blame the messenger**

By Jim Waters

It's Blame the Messenger Week.

In Washington, Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., blamed the tea party for the decline of America's credit rating for the first time in history. Kerry called it ["a tea party downgrade."](#)

David Axelrod, President Obama's campaign strategist, showed he got the Propaganda Memo by using the same, exact language.

The lesson here is: if you don't like the message, blame the messenger.

Just like most crack addicts live in denial until seriously confronted about their destructive behavior and then – when confronted – lash out at those with courage to confront, Washington's spending addicts have been raiding the savings accounts of future generations for years to satisfy their "fix."

Finally, some patriotic citizens have had the courage to call for spending reductions to accompany debt-ceiling increases.

Kerry labels that "an absurd notion." Tea party leaders respond: it's just the opposite.

"You can thank us later," said Paul Keith, chairman of the Bowling Green-Southern Kentucky Tea Party. "You're welcome. [We did a good thing not a bad thing.](#) They may not realize it, but it was a very good thing."

The real "absurd notion" here is to blame the tea party, which really is very young, for America's fiscal crisis.

As one letter writer in the Courier-Journal responded: ["It wasn't the tea party that started the vast array of social programs"](#) or "that created all the huge money pit of bureaucratic departments within every level of city, state and federal government" or that "ran up \$14 trillion in debt" or that "created Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac."

The tea party simply warns that if the fire is not put out, this artifice that has taken 234 years to build is going to come crashing down under the heaviest debt burden in America's history.

And if you think the addict doesn't like being confronted about his situation, wait until the federal government gets strapped to the gurney and is forced to go through withdrawal – as in spending cuts and caps and balanced budgets.

Talk about a painful experience for those who built political careers and destroyed a nation's economic prosperity by wastefully spending taxpayers' dollars on government programs we don't need and services we don't want – often just to satisfy big campaign contributors.

The recent rioting by England's welfare state shows that such a situation is especially bad for those who have become accustomed to “gaming” the system and living on subsidies. Could this provide insight into what happens when governments “dealing” those subsidies go “cold turkey?”

True to form, big-government dealers and their customers are equal opportunity blamers for anyone who might get in the way of satisfying their next fix. In Washington, they've been pointing fingers at the credit agency itself!

But the blame game isn't just played in Washington.

In a recent op-ed, Jefferson County teachers union boss Brent McKim attacked federal No Child Left Behind standards as too stringent.

He [blamed](#) the way policymakers “label” schools rather than acknowledging the fact that Kentucky's largest school district is a cesspool of failure when it comes to keeping kids from dropping out and properly educating them.

While NCLB is no perfect policy by any means, McKim's mindset reminds me of Jeffrey Benjamin's quip: “You succeed at being a failure when you blame someone else.”

Besides, what about the new numbers released this month by the Kentucky Department of Education showing that more than 30 percent of the Class of 2010 in McKim's district failed to graduate on time?

That depressing performance has nothing to do with NCLB ... or S&P ... or the tea party.

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