

Taking Stock

ACA PRESIDENT LEO HOLLINGER



From a political standpoint, my studies and participation have been somewhat limited. However, I do believe that government's trend toward fiscal accountability is essential and I pray that it is for real. Local, state and federal governments are all spending more than they take in. For the first time in my life, cutting spending and not big tax increases are more the topic of discussion. In the 1850s, when Abraham Lincoln was a senator, he was asked, "What was the problem in Washington?" His reply was, "There are too many pigs for the teats." Great answer then as well as now, except the sow has run out of milk.

Where will these cuts be made? Who will lose jobs, services and benefits? Right now there seem to be way more questions than there are answers. Maybe we have had too much government and too much inefficiency in government. These answers are being sought by more people than ever and that is a good thing. I'm sorry to say, but necessary budget restraints will be tough on lives of people, especially government employees that lose their jobs. From a philosophical view point, President Kennedy's famous statement, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country", is very appropriate in today's situation. Each of us will sacrifice in some way before the solution is found.

The solution I would like to see is way less government that efficiently provides only necessary services. A private business sector that is profitable hires most all workers available in this country and provides enough tax base for your new leaner government. I've always considered a pro-business climate good for everybody. Cattlemen, as part of the small business sector, would do their part.

How do you and I participate in the process of change? The first thing that comes to mind is joining with other like minded individuals. Membership in ACA would be the first step. Getting involved with the political action process through your association will magnify your voice. This is why membership numbers are so important. I hope you will get a friend or neighbor to join with us.

It was rewarding to listen to the new leadership in the Alabama House and Senate during our Board meeting last month in Montgomery. They discussed their new business-like approach to passing the state's budgets and handling some very important issues. These leaders are businessmen who understand the need to control spending and tackle tough problems head-on. I feel that this legislative session will be the one that turns the excesses and inefficiencies of state government around. I'm pleased that my Camden neighbor Lt. Governor Kay Ivey is chairing the Alabama Commission on Improving State Government and that our executive vice president serves on this important authority. We look forward to their report.

Thanks and may God Bless,
Leo



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