

## How Sad The Life Of The Leftist

Every so often I receive an email from a big-government supporter who calls conservatives hypocrites for opposing high income taxes while supporting government programs. I typically delete the email and do not bother responding because 1) leftists aren't worth the time, and 2) the argument is for the most part invalid. Conservatives do not argue for lower taxes *and* a continuation of all federal programs, regulations, and handouts. (Those who do are not conservatives.) But leftists seem unable to comprehend that many government functions do not, in fact, need to be government functions. As a result, they use the false choice argument favored by Obama: "Government should do everything or government should do nothing." Endorse the former and be expected to support high taxes and massive federal intervention in the private economy. Endorse the latter and be labeled a Dickensian character who would take food out of the mouths of babies and force everyone to drink raw sewage.

The email does not merely accuse conservatives of general hypocrisy. Someone took the time to list what he or she considered the "top 100" functions in which the federal government *must* be engaged or civilization as we know it would perish. Every item on the list is something that is apparently incapable of being performed by anyone or anything other than big government. As one might expect, there are some incredibly dumb items on the list that do not warrant attention, but shooting fish in a barrel is sometimes worth the time—if only for a little diversion. Accordingly, I have responded to each of the 100 items:

### 1. Do not use Medicare.

I do not want Medicare. I did not ask for Medicare. I would be perfectly happy if Medicare ceased to exist, Medicare taxes were no longer withheld from paychecks, and every dollar anyone has ever paid in Medicare taxes was refunded. (I will be generous and not even demand that the refund be adjusted for inflation.) I am perfectly capable of buying health insurance from a private company, and I assume I will have no problem finding physicians and hospitals willing to accept me as a non-Medicare patient.

The leftists forget that all Americans were forced into the Medicare system. They cannot opt out and must pay Medicare taxes whether they like it or not. It seems rather absurd to excoriate someone for relying on Medicare when he had no choice in the matter, but that does not prevent the leftist from doing so.

For those senior citizens already in the system it is too late to reverse it, but Medicare could be eliminated over time. Medicare coverage could continue for those already over age 65. It could be eliminated for everyone under a specific age, such as 50. And it could be made optional for all those age 50-64. Opt out and you would no longer be required to pay Medicare taxes. You would also never receive Medicare benefits, so you would have to plan ahead for your retirement years. In other words, you would have to accept responsibility for your own life—something that used to be a common American trait.

2. Do not use Social Security.

See #1.

3. Do not become a member of the US military, who are paid with tax dollars.

No conservative or Republican has ever argued that the U.S. Constitution does not provide for a military. It is one of the few *proper* functions of a government. The Defense budget can most certainly be slashed, however, and we could save tens of billions each year by letting Europe, Japan, and South Korea pay for their own defense. We need an Armed Forces but it can be much smaller than it is now, and conservatives are willing to pay for it. (Some of those troops now in Germany, Japan, and South Korea could be stationed at the U.S. border with Mexico.)

4. Do not ask the National Guard to help you after a disaster.

a.) See #3.

b.) If you have a gun and know how to use it you do not need the National Guard to protect you from looters.

5. Do not call 9-1-1 or the police when you need assistance.

Local police protection is *not* a federal function. It is not funded by federal income tax. Police protection is provided locally and is generally funded by property taxes.

6. Do not summon the fire department to save your burning home.

a.) See #5.

b.) Fire protection can be provided privately, and in many areas of the country it is. (Fire departments could be owned, operated, and funded by insurance companies, for example. After all, it is in the best interests of your insurance company for your house not to burn down, or for any fire to be extinguished as soon as possible.)

7. Do not drive on any paved road, highway, and interstate or drive on any bridge.

a.) See #3.

b.) Roads can be privately funded and maintained. (Have leftists never heard of private toll roads? Are they not aware that when a new housing subdivision is built its roads are built by the housing construction company and not the city government? Do leftists think anyone would buy a new home if it did not have access?)

8. Do not use public restrooms.

a.) This is stupid.

b.) Aside from federal buildings, one would be hard-pressed to find a federally-funded public restroom anywhere.

9. Do not send your kids to public schools.

a.) See #5.

b.) The nation would be better off if all schools were private.

10. Do not put your trash out for city garbage collectors.

a.) See #5.

b.) Are leftists too stupid to consider hiring a private contractor to collect garbage if the local government did not do it?

11. Do not live in areas with clean air and water.

No one prefers dirty air and water to clean air and water. It is not unreasonable to have minimum standards for air and water. But it is one thing to prohibit factory pollution from being discharged into the air and water, and another for government to demand that people not be allowed to smoke in their own apartments or tell farmers they cannot fill in a pond on their own property. The conservative stance is that the EPA has gotten carried away with regulations, has too much power, and has abused that power to unnecessarily destroy businesses and livelihoods. It is not a false choice issue of 100 percent pure water versus sludge. It is a matter of reasonable regulations that do not cost so much that they destroy businesses and jobs in pursuit of an impossible to achieve risk-free world. The conservative complaint is that the costs of many regulations exceed the benefits. (If it costs \$250 million to reduce from 50 parts per million to 49 parts per million the level of a particular chemical in drinking water, when anything under 150 parts per million is considered safe, should that be required—regardless of how many jobs it costs?)

12. Do not visit National Parks.

National parks are generally funded with entrance and user fees, not federal income taxes. If those fees need to be raised to cover operating expenses, do so. Let those who visit the parks pay for their upkeep.

13. Do not visit public museums, zoos, and monuments.

Those museums and zoos that are funded by the federal government charge admission fees. Many other museums were built by philanthropists. Raise the entrance fees if they are insufficient to pay for the costs of operating the facility.

14. Do not eat or use FDA inspected food and medicines.

No government agency is needed to protect the food supply. Any company that sold poisonous food would soon go out of business, and its owners would be sued.

15. Do not bring your kids to public playgrounds.

Neighborhood playgrounds are funded with local taxes, not income taxes.

16. Do not walk or run on sidewalks.

See #15.

17. Do not use public recreational facilities such as basketball and tennis courts.

See #15.

18. Do not seek shelter facilities or food in soup kitchens when you are homeless and hungry.

Most are privately funded and operated. Those that are funded by the government should be eliminated. Charity is be voluntary and private.

19. Do not apply for educational or job training assistance when you lose your job.

Such programs are an unnecessary intrusion of government in the private sector. Person A should not have to pay taxes to improve person B's job skills.

20. Do not apply for food stamps when you can't feed your children.

The food stamp program should be eliminated. Rely on private charity or get a job.

21. Do not use the judiciary system for any reason.

No conservative has called for the elimination of the court system, which is most assuredly a proper function of government.

22. Do not ask for an attorney when you are arrested and do not ask for one to be assigned to you by the court.

If you can't afford an attorney, don't break the law. Problem solved.

23. Do not apply for any Pell Grants.

Eliminate Pell grants. person A should not be taxed to subsidize person B's college education. (Eliminating federal loans and grants would also result in the lowering of tuition fees because schools would no longer be able to rely on subsidized customers to cover expenses.)

24. Do not use cures that were discovered by labs using federal dollars.

All such research can be private.

25. Do not fly on federally regulated airplanes.

No federal agency is needed. Any private airline that does not make safety a top priority will go out of business. (Do leftists think that an airline with a record of delays, poor service, and crashes would attract customers? Do leftists think we need TSA thugs forcing passengers to wait in long lines to remove their shoes? Would not the airlines do a more efficient job of ensuring safety if it were their own responsibility? Currently, travelers blame the TSA for such harassment rather than the airlines. If there were no TSA, they would blame the airlines for those inconveniences—and that would encourage the airlines to avoid them.)

26. Do not use any product that can trace its development back to NASA.

It would have been developed anyway by the private sector. (If not, so what?)

27. Do not watch the weather provided by the National Weather Service.

Are liberals so stupid as to believe that without government no private company would provide weather service?

28. Do not listen to severe weather warnings from the National Weather Service.

See #27.

29. Do not listen to tsunami, hurricane, or earthquake alert systems.

See #27.

30. Do not apply for federal housing.

Eliminate all public housing programs.

31. Do not use the Internet, which was developed by the military.

The Internet was developed primarily by private industry. Even if that were not the case, the argument is absurd. (One cannot “un-invent” what already exists. It is absurd to argue that to be ideologically “pure” a supporter of limited government must refuse all interaction with anything that any government anywhere had anything to do with.)

32. Do not swim in clean rivers.

See #11.

33. Do not allow your child to eat school lunches or breakfasts.

Pack a lunch for your children. They are your responsibility, not someone else's.

34. Do not ask for FEMA assistance when everything you own gets wiped out by disaster.

Eliminate FEMA. You are on your own if you build a house on the beach or in a flood plain. Buy private insurance. If you think the premium is too high, buy or build somewhere else. There is no Constitutional right to a beach house paid for by someone else.

35. Do not ask the military to defend your life and home in the event of a foreign invasion.

See #3.

36. Do not use your cell phone or home telephone.

The phone industry is private.

37. Do not buy firearms that wouldn't have been developed without the support of the US Government and military. That includes most of them.

That is simply stupid. (See #31.)

38. Do not eat USDA inspected produce and meat.

No company would remain in business if it sold tainted meat. No federal regulation is necessary.

39. Do not apply for government grants to start your own business.

Eliminate all such grants and loans.

40. Do not apply to win a government contract.

See #3. Just as maintaining a military and a court system are essential functions of government, so is keeping them supplied. Selling ammunition to the Armed Forces or paper to the Supreme Court is not being dependent on government; it is not welfare or food stamps.

41. Do not buy any vehicle that has been inspected by government safety agencies.

No such agencies are necessary. If a company sells defective or dangerous products it will go out of business.

42. Do not buy any product that is protected from poisons, toxins, etc. by the Consumer Protection Agency.

See #41.

43. Do not save your money in a bank that is FDIC insured.

The FDIC should be eliminated. The agency is superfluous, and has nowhere near the money needed to cover even one large bank's failure. (Intelligent individuals have enough sense to divide their savings between banks.)

44. Do not use Veterans benefits or military health care.

See #3. Such benefits are part of a soldier's pay. He earned them.

45. Do not use the G.I. Bill to go to college.

See #44. Such benefits are nothing more than deferred compensation. (Members of the military could, of course, be paid higher salaries in exchange for the elimination of such benefits.)

46. Do not apply for unemployment benefits.

Those benefits can and should be eliminated. Everyone should save for a rainy day. Paying people not to work discourages them from looking for work. (Most recessions end when the unemployment benefits run out.)

47. Do not use any electricity from companies regulated by the Department of Energy.

Such regulations are unnecessary.

48. Do not live in homes that are built to code.

Building codes are unnecessary and cause a shortage of low-cost housing. It should not be against the law to build a small house on a small lot.

49. Do not run for public office. Politicians are paid with taxpayer dollars.

That is simply stupid.

50. Do not ask for help from the FBI, S.W.A.T, the bomb squad, Homeland Security, State troopers, etc.

a.) See #3.

b.) See #5.

c.) The Department of Homeland Security should be eliminated.

51. Do not apply for any government job whatsoever as all state and federal employees are paid with tax dollars.

See # 49.

52. Do not use public libraries.

a.) See #5.

b.) See #13.

b.) There are many private libraries—and something called the Internet.

53. Do not use the U.S. Postal Service.

a.) See #3.

b.) The USPS can be eliminated and its functions can be performed more efficiently by private industry.

54. Do not visit the National Archives.

See #3.

55. Do not visit Presidential Libraries.

They are generally funded with private donations. Any federal funding can and should be eliminated.

56. Do not use airports that are secured by the federal government.

Such federal oversight is unnecessary. All airports can be privately owned, protected, and maintained.

57. Do not apply for loans from any bank that is FDIC insured.

See #43.

58. Do not ask the government to help you clean up after a tornado.

a.) See #34.

b.) Buy homeowner's insurance.

59. Do not ask the Department of Agriculture to provide a subsidy to help you run your farm.

Eliminate the Department of Agriculture.



60. Do not take walks in National Forests.

a.) That is stupid.

b.) See #3.

61. Do not ask for taxpayer dollars for your oil company.

Oil companies do not receive tax dollars. They do, however, use various tax credits, as do all businesses. All such deductions and credits could be eliminated, in exchange for lowering the corporate tax rate.

62. Do not ask the federal government to bail your company out during recessions.

No company, bank, or state or local government should be bailed out by the federal government. GM and Chrysler should have been allowed to go through normal bankruptcy procedures.

63. Do not seek medical care from places that use federal dollars.

Eliminate those federal subsidies.

64. Do not use Medicaid.

Eliminate Medicaid.

65. Do not use WIC.

Eliminate the WIC program.

66. Do not use electricity generated by Hoover Dam.

Sell it and make it private.

67. Do not use electricity or any service provided by the Tennessee Valley Authority.

See #66.

68. Do not ask the Army Corps of Engineers to rebuild levees when they break.

It is not a problem if you do not build or buy a house on a flood plain near a levee.

69. Do not let the Coast Guard save you from drowning when your boat capsizes at sea.

See #3.

70. Do not ask the government to help evacuate you when all hell breaks loose in the country you are in.

The government will not be capable of doing so anyway. Buy guns and ammunition and keep a supply of food, water, and other necessities in your home at all times. (The greater the disaster, the less likely the government will be of any use to the average victim.)

71. Do not visit historic landmarks.

a.) See #.

b.) Sell them and let them be maintained privately. (What difference does it make who owns Lincoln's former house in Springfield, Illinois?)

72. Do not visit fisheries.

Sell them to private industry. (Who visits fisheries?)

73. Do not expect to see animals that are federally protected because of the Endangered Species List.

There are more extinct species than there are living species. Losing a few more is nothing to worry about. However, the best way to protect a species is to allow private ownership of such at-risk animals. (Breeding elephants for their ivory, for example, protects them better than laws against poaching.)

74. Do not expect plows to clear roads of snow and ice so your kids can go to school and so you can get to work.

See #5.

Plowing is done locally, not by the federal government.

75. Do not hunt or camp on federal land.

Sell the lands. (They will be better maintained.)

76. Do not work anywhere that has a safe workplace because of government regulations.

Americans should be free to work wherever they choose to work. If they choose to accept risky jobs that is their business. If a company has a reputation for being a dangerous place to work, no one will want to work there—or they will demand higher wages to compensate for the risk. (You cannot make coal mines risk free.)

77. Do not use public transportation.

a.) See #5.

b.) Sell such systems and make them private. They will operate more efficiently. (Start with Amtrak.)

78. Do not drink water from public water fountains.

See #5.

79. Do not whine when someone copies your work and sells it as their own. Government enforces copyright laws.

See #3.

80. Do not expect to own your home, car, or boat. Government organizes and keeps all titles.

a.) See #5.

b.) That function can be performed privately.

81. Do not expect convicted felons to remain off the streets.

a.) See #3.

b.) See #5.

82. Do not eat in restaurants that are regulated by food quality and safety standards.

a.) See #5.

b.) Bad restaurants go out of business every day. No federal agency is necessary to police the market when consumers are free to make their own informed choices.

83. Do not seek help from the US Embassy if you need assistance in a foreign nation.

See #3.

84. Do not apply for a passport to travel outside of the United States.

See #3.

85. Do not apply for a patent when you invent something.

See #3.

86. Do not adopt a child through your local, state, or federal governments.

The government need not be involved with adoptions. There is no reason private agencies cannot handle all the issues.

87. Do not use elevators that have been inspected by federal or state safety regulators.

No elevator company would remain in business if it sold and installed faulty equipment and failed to keep it properly maintained.

88. Do not use any resource that was discovered by the U.S. Geological Survey

Let private industry do it. It is perfectly capable of finding oil and other resources.

89. Do not ask for energy assistance from the government.

No one should. The Department of Energy, which produces no energy, should be eliminated. (The nation certainly had energy before that department was created.)

90. Do not move to any other developed nation, because the taxes are much higher.

What does that have to do with the proper responsibilities of the U.S. government?

91. Do not go to a beach that is kept clean by the state.

a.) See #3.

b.) See #5.

92. Do not use money printed by the US Treasury.

Many conservatives would be happy to see the elimination of the Federal Reserve and a return to the gold standard. Reliance of money backed by gold and silver would eliminate inflation and reduce the government's ability to operate at a deficit.

93. Do not complain when millions more illegal immigrants cross the border because there are no more border patrol agents.

See #3.

94. Do not attend a state university.

All schools can and should be private.

95. Do not see any doctor that is licensed through the state.

a.) See #5.

b.) State licensing is arguably unnecessary. Experience and reputation are more important. (Like good doctors, bad doctors also have licenses.)

96. Do not use any water from municipal water systems.

See #5.

97. Do not complain when diseases and viruses, that were once fought around the globe by the US government and CDC, reach your house.

See #3. The government has a reputation for baking things worse, in fact. (For example, by prohibiting the pesticide DDT it caused millions of unnecessary deaths from malaria-borne mosquitoes.)

98. Do not work for any company that is required to pay its workers a livable wage, provide them sick days, vacation days, and benefits.

Every American should be able to work for anyone he wants for whatever wages and benefits to which they can mutually agree. The government has no right to tell someone he cannot accept a job that he is willing to accept.

99. Do not expect to be able to vote on election days. Government provides voting booths, election day officials, and voting machines which are paid for with taxes.

a.) That is incredibly stupid.

b.) See #3.

100. Do not ride trains. The railroad was built with government financial assistance.

Previous government interference in the market cannot be undone, but all public railroads can be sold and run privately—starting with the perpetual money loser Amtrak.

One can see from the list of 100 items, and the fact that it gets passed around the Internet quite a bit, that there are an awful lot of leftists who have so little confidence in their own abilities that they believe virtually every aspect of their lives must involve the government. Wandering hungry in an apple orchard, they would apparently starve to death if there were no federal signs declaring the fruit to be free of pesticides. Without government bureaucrats to protect them, they would apparently allow garbage to pile up on their city streets and not once consider hiring a private waste company to haul it away—and if there were no such private company it would be beyond the capabilities of their limited liberal minds to imagine starting one.

“The list” is meant to “prove” how much conservatives rely on government and to shame them into agreeing that higher taxes are the road to utopia. In fact, what the list does is prove that leftists lack imagination, ingenuity, self-assurance, and self-reliance.

A leftist’s life is very sad indeed...

*Don Fredrick*  
*January 27, 2013*

