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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Mystery Novelist Digger Cartwright Participates in Thinking Outside the Boxe's Annual Symposium**

**Orlando, FL, Miami, FL & Washington, D.C. (PRWEB)  
January 22, 2013**— The office of Digger Cartwright, mystery novelist and industrialist, released the transcripts of his responses to the question and answer session from Thinking Outside the Boxe's 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium held in Orlando from December 23-31, 2012. The symposium focused on topics such as recent economic conditions and the outlook for the coming year, geopolitical events, domestic politics, etc.

Mr. Cartwright's opening statement was as follows:

"Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for being here today. I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Thinking Outside the Boxe Symposium. This is always a wonderful event, and it's an honor to be invited here to share with you my own thoughts on some of the most important issues that we face here in America.

"Nine symposiums and I understand that 2013 marks the tenth anniversary of Thinking Outside the Boxe. It is an impressive record of dedication and contribution to our political, economic, and social debates in America. I first participated in this symposium about five years ago, I believe it was. It was a refreshing event, and it first introduced me to the dedication this organization has to coming up with creative and sometimes controversial solutions to various problems. And I have to say that I have not been disappointed since then.

"Oftentimes, this organization says what millions of Americans throughout this great nation are thinking. They say the things that aren't necessarily popular or that run counter to prevailing dialogue. They say things that are controversial. They say the things that so often get lost in the high brow discussions of colleges and universities and political circles. They say the things that these so-called intellectuals, these intellectual elitists, look



down upon. They speak in real, everyday terms that people of all walks of life connect with. Theirs is a voice of reason and common sense. They say what is on peoples' minds every day.

"It is easy for the mainstream to dismiss what Thinking Outside the Boxe stands for and what they say and the research they do. It is easy to label think tanks as liberal thinkers or conservative thinkers, as promoters of liberal or conservative ideas. It is easy to criticize and say why Thinking Outside the Boxe's proposals won't work or why they're wrong. This organization can be criticized and has been criticized by many for their ideas, but I have come to learn that this organization cannot be criticized for its fairness. Thinking Outside the Boxe gives praise where merit is due, regardless of political party, and it gives criticism where criticism is due, regardless of political party. It has criticized President Obama, but in looking at many of it's historical writings, it was critical of the Bush Administration on various issues. But at the end of the day, Thinking Outside the Boxe's commentaries have been clear, concise, balanced and remarkably poignant. More importantly, their proposals and their efforts have been focused on making America a better place for everyone, on making America stronger and more financially secure, and ensuring that the blessings of liberty that this generation and those before us have enjoyed are enjoyed for generations to come.

"We are at a great crossroads in our history. One path leads to bigger government and an erosion of our personal liberties, a subrogation of those liberties and our lives to an ever growing and ever intrusive federal government. The other path leads to smaller government, an expansion of personal liberties and freedom, and an economic stability and growth and success that can only be expected from the greatest nation this world has ever known. The path to bigger government is a dark one, yet the Sirens lure in the weak and those with little hope with false promises of abundance for all and equality for all. The path to smaller government is one that is well lighted



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by the torch of freedom and liberty and is the path that our Founding Fathers chose for this nation.

"Politicians today hope to take us from the path envisioned by our Founding Fathers, the path upon which they set us, and divert our efforts to a path that others have followed only find despair, failure, erosion of liberty, and economic hardship. All too many want to walk a tightrope between the two paths and offer the best of both worlds to the masses. But walking the dark path of bigger and more intrusive government however slightly and however noble it may seem is like walking a path that slowly turns to quicksand. Ultimately, the force of its weight and power will suck you in, and there will be no return.

"We must be vigilant as America moves forward. We must keep in mind the ideals that were espoused by our Founding Fathers, and we must not let smooth-talking, career politicians corrupt our system with words aimed at dividing us as a nation so that they may conquer us all. False promises and false hope of a better way forward are the deceptions of bigger government. The government doesn't have the answers and doesn't know what's best. The people of America have the answers and know what's best. But we cannot allow the increasing influence of those who only take from the government to dictate to the government and to those who contribute to the government. To do so is to create a self-perpetuating cycle of bigger government, of taking more and more from those who are productive and from those who contribute to give to those who are neither, and that ultimately leads to a collapse and repression of those liberties that our ancestors fought for and died for.

"I know that Thinking Outside the Boxe will continue to fight this good fight and will continue to promote a set of ideals that stem from our Founding Fathers. I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this advancement of ideals and the promotion of liberty as espoused by our founders. I share a common commitment to promote non-partisan and fair dialogue on our most pressing problems with the overall goal of making America a better



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place for our citizens by promoting and protecting our personal liberties and ensuring that America retains a strong economic foundation thereby providing opportunities for anyone with the will and the want to be successful.

"Once again, thank you for having me at this event. I look forward to discussing the topics at hand."

**1) What are the consequences if America goes off the fiscal cliff?**

Take the bus off the damn cliff and get it over with. Fact of the matter is the end of the Bush tax cuts will have a bigger effect on people in the lower tax brackets than people in the higher tax brackets. And guess what, those in the lower brackets are probably the ones who voted Obama a second term. So, when their paychecks get smaller next year, they can thank him. Don't blame the Republicans, just thank the Democrats. This is what they want. They don't care if we go off the cliff.

Everything that Mr. Clinger said in his response is right. If we go off the cliff, it's not the end of the world. The government's profligate spending is what is going to destroy us. No one at this event can individually spend more than what they make on an on-going basis. It just doesn't work that way. Everyone here has a budget that they have to adhere to. We all have spending limits. We can't just print money. But the politicians in Washington don't understand that, because they think they can just print more money or tax people more. They're economic idiots!

There's a fundamental problem when you constantly budget annual increases, and the only reductions in spending are reductions in the increases in spending. It would be like each of us budgeting for a 10% per year increase in our spending budget when in reality our income is only increasing by 3% or so. After the first year, we find ourselves in debt because we spent



more than we made. So, for the second year, our spending budget is based on the prior year's level but with only a 5% increase. And in reality, in the second year, our income only grows by 3% again. We go in the hole again, then we do the same thing in the third year. This is asinine, but this is the way they do it in Washington! Make any sense?

If we are ever to get meaningful spending cuts, we need to cut the base spending not just the rate of increase in spending. So, if we spend \$1 trillion this year, we spend only \$900 billion next year. That's cuts in spending. And actually, that's what the sequester does, but have you noticed that no one in Washington wants to go along with that plan now? Oh, let's not cut spending. Hell, that's just what we need, but sadly the sequester doesn't go far enough.

But there's a second part to this equation that we can't forget—revenues. If the economy were growing at about 5% or 6% annually for a couple of years, we'd be generating a lot more in revenues and the budget deficit wouldn't be so large. We you have an economy that is producing at its potential, there are a lot of positive benefits—people are working and paying taxes and spending money. All of that leads to a strong economic base and higher revenues brought in from taxes. Just think, if we reduced the headline unemployment rate from 7.9% to 6%, we'd be looking at about 3 million more people employed. That means there'd be 3 million more taxpayers paying payroll taxes, income taxes, sales taxes on goods purchased, etc. And, if we could reduce the real unemployment rate—that counts people who have given up looking for jobs or who are working less than what they want—to 6%, we'd be looking at about 10 million workers back in the workforce. Think that would have an impact on getting the economy going? Obviously, we're talking big numbers, but I don't want to overplay what it can do. People working isn't the cure for all our problems. We have to have spending restraint at the federal and state levels. We've got to make



meaningful and deep spending cuts across the board. No programme and no department should be spared on the spending cuts. Everything from entitlement programmes to defense to education to foreign aid should be on the chopping block.

Sadly, I'm afraid the Republicans in the House of Representatives are going to cave and give in to the President. So, we'll get higher taxes and virtually no meaningful spending cuts. We won't get any tax reform or changes to entitlement. Let's go off the fiscal cliff now, let the economy go into recession again, then have a meaningful debate during mid-term elections in 2014. By then, maybe the Republicans can have their acts together and actually get something accomplished. Ah, but wait a minute! We've got the debt ceiling issue coming back up in early 2013. So, maybe that will be an opportunity to force some massive spending cuts. Or maybe they'll just raise taxes again.

But I'd like to make one more point if I may, and that's about the effects of Obamacare in 2013 and beyond. We're starting to get a picture of what this is going to mean in terms of new taxes, fees, or whatever they want to call it. Make no mistake, each and every single American worker and taxpayer is going to be paying more to the federal government starting next year just to pay for Obamacare. I know there are a lot of people out there who don't think it is going to affect them, but they're going to be in for a rude awakening. There's stuff in that bill that the IRS is finding out about now that no one ever dreamed of. It isn't going to be pretty, and businesses aren't going to take this lightly. Businesses aren't going to hire or expand if they've got this massive new expense. And how are we ever going to get the economy going again if businesses don't hire workers or start laying off workers again or reducing them all to part time? Not everyone can work for the government.



**2) What are your thoughts on the debt ceiling debate that will be forthcoming in 2013?**

Realistically is anything going to happen when it comes to the debt ceiling debate? No. The Congress will raise the debt ceiling so the President and his friends in the Congress can keep squandering away the taxpayers' money. I find it the epitome of hubris that the President actually wants the Congress to give him the sole authority over increasing the debt ceiling. That's a sure recipe for disaster. There wouldn't be anything stopping him from spending us into bankruptcy. Maybe that's his goal in the long run. He's sure doing a fine job of it right now.

But the politicians will take this whole debt ceiling charade right up to the zero hour then agree to increase the limit so that the government doesn't have to shut down. I don't understand why everyone in Washington is so afraid to have the government shut down. All we're talking about is non-essential services shutting down. Social Security checks would still be going out. The military would still be defending us. We'd just be looking at a closure of things like national parks and maybe the folks at the Department of Energy would have to stay at home. Not like they're doing much good anyway.

Shut down the non-essential stuff. If it is non-essential, they why is the government involved anyway? Use it as an opportunity to downsize the federal government. You know what I'm saying? Sadly, though, that isn't going to happen.

My prediction is they'll raise the debt ceiling to \$20 trillion, which should be enough to accommodate Obama and the Democrats' spending until the 2014 mid-term elections. And then, we'll be debating it all again.



### 3) Election 2012—What happened to the Republicans?

The underlying presumption is that we had a choice in the election process. I think that is the first fallacy. We're given the illusion of having a choice, but these candidates are hand-picked and they go through a dog and pony show in the run up to the election. I actually think it was already predetermined who was going to win the election, and we go through this sham to keep the voters feeling like their vote matters.

Four years ago we had our choice between Barack Obama, a left wing liberal, and John McCain, an avowed progressive. The voters had the choice between two less than desirable candidates, and the progressive movement won regardless. This election cycle we have the same left wing liberal and another RINO, Republican In Name Only. The progressive movement would have won either way.

I hate to be cynical, but I've become very jaded in this political cycle. Mitt Romney wasn't the ideal candidate for the Republicans, and while it's notoriously difficult to unseat an incumbent, Obama was like a sitting duck. He had so much baggage from the first term that it's almost inconceivable we're sitting here today with him having been re-elected. Either the American people, the voters, are a bunch of brain dead dumb asses or the process was already fixed. Yes, we were given the choice between the lesser of two evils, but Romney couldn't have done any worse than Obama. So you look to see that we've got early voting that is heavily skewed for the Democrats, illegal voting, and rigged voting machines, and it's easy to see why Obama was re-elected. If you stuff the ballot boxes with enough early votes and rig the machines to vote for you on election day, it doesn't matter who the other side puts up. You can't win when you're playing with a stacked deck of cards.



So, if you presume that we actually have a choice in the election process and if you presume that Romney was an all right candidate, and I subscribe to neither of those philosophies, it comes down to one of three things—either the Romney campaign failed in delivering a clear, convincing, and enthusiastic message or the American voters are so stupid that they would prefer to have us continue down the same path of failed economic policies as the last four years or the majority of American voters have been bought and paid for with government handouts from the Democrats. In any scenario, it doesn't bode well for the future of our country if we've got people just voting for the person who's going to give them the biggest handout. As a candidate, you can't give someone cash to vote for you, but you can give them an EBT card to ensure they vote for you. What's the difference? The system is rigged to the detriment of the American taxpayer.

**4) What's your outlook for a second Obama administration?**

More of the same overregulation and failed economic policies that have driven up our national debt, made us less competitive, killed jobs, raised taxes on American workers and killed business in this country. I think the President has such a big ego and such hubris that his re-election will embolden him in pursuing his radical liberal agenda.

It's clear that he feels he has this huge mandate in the aftermath of the election, and we're seeing him try to use that to his advantage with the whole fiscal cliff issue. He's pursuing this 'my way or the highway' strategy that is destructive to the American taxpayers. I have long believed that he has a strong socialist agenda as we've witnessed by his massive government takeover of healthcare with the Obamacare legislation. He wants to increase the entitlement state, which he has effectively done. He wants to tax everyone more and spread the wealth. He wants to increase the size and scope of government which he's done and will continue to do.



Hopefully, after the 2014 mid-term elections, he'll be a lame duck and he'll just be relegated to the sidelines. But I wouldn't put it passed him or his Democratic colleagues in the Congress to try to find a way around the United States Constitution 22<sup>nd</sup> Amendment to allow him to serve another term.

Let's just say that he's probably got about two years of bold ambition left. I think he'll go after the energy industry. He's pretty much killed the coal industry. I figure gas and oil will be next on the list. Everyone brace themselves for \$6 per gallon gasoline. And everyone's utility bills are going to skyrocket in the near future. We're probably going to see massive taxes as Obamacare if fully implemented. He's still going to work to find ways to increase everyone's taxes. I think he's going to continue to find ways to increase government entitlements, particularly for illegals. And I think he's going to try to find a way to give amnesty to all the illegals here in the United States and open the doors so that we'll be flooded with immigrants that will vote for him. And I think the biggest push in the next few months is obviously going to be on gun control or an infringement of our second amendment right to bear arms. In the wake of the Sandy Hook school massacre, liberals are foaming at the mouth that this could be the opening they need to ban guns or otherwise impose severe gun control laws.

I will tell you this. My biggest fear is that the Republicans lose the House in the 2014 election. If Obama gets control of the whole Congress, America is pretty well doomed. We'll never be able to break free from the Democrats' radical liberal agenda.

**5) What are your thoughts on Benghazi?**

It's a tragedy that we lost our first ambassador in almost forty years and three other Americans. You have to ask yourself why did Washington not send Marines who where only an hour or so away to help the



ambassador once they knew there was trouble? Remember, eight hours elapsed from the time the trouble started until the ambassador was dragged out of the compound and murdered like a dirty dog. Why didn't the United States send help for him? I think it only suggests one conclusion. Washington wanted the ambassador dead. And now the question naturally follows, why? I suppose he knew too much about something. My theory is that this was all about gun running, much like the fast and the furious. We were supplying arms to the people we thought were 'freedom fighters' that toppled Muammar Gaddafi, but these people actually turned out to be al-Qaeda terrorists. The ambassador was probably the front man for this operation, so when the troubled started and these people turned on us, Washington had to sacrifice the ambassador.

Sound cynical? Sound conspiratorial? Maybe so, but what other logical explanation is there? You don't just strand your ambassador to be murdered without trying to help. There's a lot more to this story than meets the eye. I don't know if we'll ever get to the truth, but I certainly hope that the Congress investigates this fully and get to the truth, where ever that may lead regardless of how high it goes in the government. I honestly don't think that will happen. The liberal media has pretty well swept this whole thing under the rug and tried to make it a non-issue, because they're afraid it may compromise the reputation of their 'chosen one.'

Besides, I find it very strange that Secretary Clinton has yet to appear before the Congress to give testimony on this issue, and how convenient that she has a concussion that prevented her from making an appearance this past week. Why doesn't she want to testify or why is she stonewalling? If there's nothing to hide, come forward and tell us what you know and when you knew it. No, this whole thing just smacks of a cover up. And remember, it's never the actual act that gets you in trouble—it's the cover up.



**6) Superstorm Sandy—Do we need to shore up FEMA?**

Shore it up? Hell, we need to get rid of FEMA. Let's see, they didn't do much with Katrina, and now we're finding out that they haven't done much with Sandy. It's real hypocritical that the liberal media crucified President George W. Bush in the aftermath of Katrina, but Obama has gotten a free pass with Sandy. Obama went on national TV and said the government was going to cut the red tape and the bureaucracy to get the recovery underway. In fact, no of that was done. Just ask the people who have been displaced. Ask the thousands of people who didn't have power for weeks and didn't have heat when the blizzard hit the same areas. And remember all those long lines for gas? And how about the people getting in fights over food and water and gasoline? FEMA didn't do a damn thing for those people just like it didn't do a damn thing for the people of New Orleans after Katrina.

You know, there is a bit of poetic justice here. The same liberal elitists in New York who moaned and groaned and bitched and complained about New Orleans and who looked down their noses at the South whenever there have been hurricanes got a big helping of humble pie with Sandy. They didn't give a damn about us down here in the South anytime we've had a storm. Hell, the liberal media would hardly mention it and then move on. But, oh my God! Poor New York and New Jersey! God help us! What are we going to do? The poor people of New York and New Jersey! We've got to help them! It's sickening to see how they've poured so much sympathy out for these people. Didn't they go through something similar on a smaller scale about a year ago? Didn't that teach them to get prepared? No, they didn't do a damn thing to get prepared. So, I'm sorry, but I don't have much sympathy overall. Oh, and how about the unions in New York turning away the volunteers from the South who were going to try to help restore power? Yeah, if you were cold and in the dark for weeks, thank the unions.



But back to the question at hand regarding FEMA. I think the organization is totally dysfunctional. Take the \$6 billion budget that we give to FEMA, create a special trust fund, and let Red Cross take over the responsibilities in the aftermath. If there's a terrorist attack or something cataclysmic, let the federal government send in the military to help out. Otherwise, the federal government shouldn't be involved. Let the governor of each state call up the National Guard in the aftermath of something like Sandy and let them handle it. The last thing anyone should want is for federal workers to show up to 'help.' That's just asking for problems. Name one thing that the federal government has done efficiently.

**7) Should the U.S. be involved in removing Assad from power in Syria?**

No, no involvement in Syria. I do think it was a good move to put some troops on the Turkey-Syria border as a deterrent to it spilling over into Turkey. But we just don't need to get drawn into this matter. There's no strategic value for us. My main concern is that Assad gets deposed and the country gets hijacked by terrorist organizations or those sympathetic to al-Qaeda. At least we know Assad and what he's all about. We can't say that about the rebels. What's the old saying about all that glitters is not gold?

**8) Will Egypt revert to a dictatorship?**

Hasn't it already? Look, here's the reality. Many people in many countries throughout the world have been ruled by kings or pharos or dictators for much of known history. These people don't know democracy, and while it's an admirable goal to spread democracy, it just isn't feasible. These people can't handle it. They need the strong arm of a ruler. We're seeing that in many places. Democracy in Afghanistan is fragile, but they'll eventually revert to Taliban rule. It'll probably be in the next five years. Look



at what has happened in Egypt and Libya since the dictators have been deposed. You've got managed chaos. These people aren't going to be able to handle democracy. They'll eventually revert to having a dictator.

But consider this. Egypt and Libya were relatively stable places when Mubarak and Gaddafi were in power. Yes, they weren't the best of people, but there was stability. We didn't have to worry about those countries being hijacked by the terrorists. The United States had Egypt in check, and after we gave Muammar the ultimatum after 9/11, he pretty much fell in line as well. Now, we have Egypt that is going to take a hard turn towards Islamist rule of law and Libya is likely to do the same thing. And we run the real risk of either one of these nation's becoming the first al-Qaeda state. Now, there's absolutely nothing we can do about it. We can thank the Obama people for that. The whole Arab Spring while a good concept in theory just isn't a good reality.

Do I think Egypt is going to revert to a dictatorship? Yes, it's just a matter of time. But this time, we're going to have hardline Islamist radicals in charge that will destabilize the region even further and will probably become more hostile to Israel. And it's real frightening that the hardline Islamist radicals that will run Egypt will have control of the Suez Canal. I don't really think anyone understands how powerful a tool that is. Want to economically cripple the West? Close the Suez Canal and watch the price of oil surge. Higher oil prices leads to higher gas prices and higher prices for goods and services and then inflation and a rapid economic descent. Think it can't happen? Just watch.



**9) What hope do students graduating today have for finding employment sufficient to pay off their student loans? Is there a better way forward?**

College is a big business. It's a grim reality and pretty harsh, but it is reality. We can't keep misleading the youth. All the big schools care about it getting their money for as long as they can. Did you know that colleges and universities throughout America are finding ways to game the curriculum so that students can't complete their education in four years? Why? It makes them more money. And all the while, these kids are getting further and further in debt.

If we want to talk about conspiracies, here's the conspiracy. The colleges and universities suck these kids in with the illusion that they'll get a degree and start making a million bucks. We all know that doesn't happen, but these kids are impressionable and they're full of hope. So, they get student loans in the tens of thousands of dollars. Hell, they can get loans for more than what the tuition and books cost. How does that work? That's why all these college kids go on cruises all the time and really party it up. They're getting free money. If they're not getting it from mommy and daddy because they're spoiled little shithheads, they're taking out low interest student loans and living the high life during college.

So, they get out of school and they don't have a job and they've got to start paying back these student loans. Well, they feel all of a sudden that they should be getting a free ride and that they shouldn't have to pay this back. Let's remember that college campuses are filled with liberal, socialist, progressive instructors filling these kids' head full of propaganda. They're teaching them that big government is the answer and that they're entitled to everything for free. They're teaching them that successful people are evil and that they've taken advantage of the little people along the way. They're



getting them predisposed to the notion of socialism. Think that isn't the case? Guess who the biggest supporters of Obama have been...the college youth.

It's not a stretch to believe that these kids who have just graduated with thousands in student loans feel their debt should be forgiven by the government. And guess what...they'll do whatever their told by the person who promises to forgive that debt, and they'll kill for the person who actually forgives that debt. They're ready, willing, and able to be controlled by anyone who is willing to give them something for nothing. This is like a modern day Hitler's Youth. Think it can't happen? It can and very easily.

These kids are only interested in getting something for nothing. They don't have any sense of personal responsibility. Ever notice their bad grades aren't their fault? Oh, no, they failed because the teacher didn't like them or the teacher didn't teach and not because they were lazy and shiftless, sitting at home all day getting high, eating pizza, and playing video games. And Mommy and Daddy had to call the dean of the school and bitch and complain until they agreed to let their little baby pass.

You know what, these kids that graduate with thousands in student debt don't really have any hope. The world is tough and they just bought and paid for a very valuable lesson...the person selling you the promise of the land of milk and honey has a vested interest in you spending the money on getting the education at their facility. Is there a better way forward? Yes. We need really stringent aptitude tests for kids going to college. If you don't measure up, you can test for vocation school. If that doesn't work either, you can go to the military; they'll take care of you.

We need to quit coddling these little shithead kids. If Mommy and Daddy want to take care of them their entire lives, so be it, but it shouldn't be on the taxpayer to fund them and their derelict lifestyles.



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We need to get back to the concept of personal responsibility. It's not up to the government to subsidize your education. There's plenty of scholarships out there for people who apply themselves and who are willing to work hard.

The government needs to get out of the business of student loans altogether. Oh, but wait a minute, then they won't be able to control millions of people down the road. Most of these kids are going to be in debt to the man the rest of their lives. Don't whine about it. You spent the money, now pay it back. If you can't get a job, go into the military and pay it back that way.

**10) Can America ever achieve energy independence?**

Not as long as Americans are obsessed with driving their cars and aren't willing to make sacrifices. Hell, they bitch when the price of gas goes up ten or fifteen cents. The way we're going there is absolutely no hope of achieving energy independence.

However, I have had several proposals to help curb our dependence on foreign oil. I personally prefer raising the gasoline tax to five dollars per gallon. Let's get it up there so high that we'll see a lot of people quit driving or they will be more judicious in their driving habits. That's the only way to do it. As long as gas is relatively cheap, Americans will keep driving and making Middle Eastern nations rich. If we get gas prices up high enough, a lot of people won't be able to afford the gas and others will just choose not to pay it. Then there will be people like me who don't care how much it costs. I'll still pay it. The people that can't afford it will either car pool or take public transportation. I don't really care what they do. They'll be less people on the road, less accidents, less pollution, lower insurance premiums, and so on and so forth. I wrote a whole article about this not long ago.



In general, the American people are lazy slobs that have an insatiable appetite for consumption. They want to be able to get in their cars and drive whenever and wherever they want. They'll get in their cars and drive down the street rather than walk. We've got to change their behavior if we want to achieve energy independence. Supply isn't the answer. Supply isn't the problem. Consumption is the problem. We consume too much gasoline as a nation. The only way to change the consumption is through higher prices. Gas prices are elastic. As prices rise, consumption decreases.

Changes in consumption are the only way for America to achieve energy independence.

I've long believed that one of the worst things we've ever done in America is end the gas rationing of the 1970s. At that point, people were trained. The gas rationing affected peoples' driving habits in a positive way. I was glad to see gas rationing in New York and New Jersey after Sandy. It's something else we need to consider to influence the gas consumption behavior of consumers. If you can only buy so many gallons a week and on certain days, guess what? You're going to be more selective in how much and where and when you drive.

**11) Is it time to legalize drugs here in America?**

We've been fighting a war on drugs in America for the last forty years and it hasn't stopped people from getting high or using drugs. We've wasted billions of dollars in this "war" to no avail. Let's legalize drugs, regulate them, and tax the industry just like with tobacco. We're starting to see this in some areas of the country. Marijuana is pretty well legally available on every street in California. I think they actually have more medical marijuana dispensaries than Starbucks in California. Colorado legalized marijuana in essence in November, and they're starting to see members-only clubs for



lighting up. Let the members-only clubs be for all kinds of drugs. If people want to do them, go there and get high or strung up until your heart's content. But, they need to stay there until their done getting their fix and they've come down so they're not out on the roads or in public potentially causing harm to others.

I'm a big fan of the gaming industry. Take a lesson from them. If you've got a problem, they're not going to let you just keep gambling. You'll hit a limit then you'll have to sit out for a while. And, they're good about getting compulsive gamblers help for their addiction. The same model could be used for a legalized drug industry. Have strict regulations and guidelines and security for the protection of the people using the drugs and for the general public.

Look, I don't support people using drugs. No good comes from that lifestyle. It's a destructive path for many people. But the reality is that we're never going to stop people from using drugs. There's a huge underground economy stemming from the illegal drug trade. Make it legal and start making money off of it. Want to fund Medicare, Medicaid, and Obamacare? Legalize drugs, regulate the industry and tax it.

**12) Has America lost its role as a superpower?**

We haven't been the world's superpower for a long time. Sorry to burst your bubble, my friend. We've got a great military, but they're tired of fighting two wars over the last decade. And we're going to see some massive cuts in the military during a second Obama term, whether we get a deal on the fiscal cliff and avoid the spending cuts under sequester or not.

Obama and his liberal friends don't believe in a strong military. They see that as a bad thing. They think if we scale back our military we won't be as threatening on the world stage and these other countries will like us. Unfortunately, that's a



fallacy. These other countries are going to hate us whether we have a big military or not. But here's one truth, if we appear weak, these other countries won't respect us. They won't fear us and they won't respect us. If they're afraid of us and our military, they'll respect us. But look, the military isn't the only issue. These other countries need to fear and respect our leaders. When Obama went on his apology tour when he got in office, it made him and consequently the U.S. look weak, and other countries lost respect for us. So, in this regard, we're not a superpower.

And I don't buy the assertion that we're the world's economic superpower being espoused by my patriotic friend here. Let me say that I admire his patriotism. I don't know of many people who love this country as much as he does and who believe inherently in this country as much as he does. I know that what's happening in this country now and what's happened of late has really torn him apart and challenged his belief in this country, but I also know that despite everything he still believes in America and that America is the only game in town. I hope that ultimately he's right about the resilience of the American economy, but I don't think we're the world's economic superpower anymore.

We're being financially crippled more and more each day that passes. We have an unsustainable federal debt that is going to increase even more in a second Obama administration. We have unsustainable budget deficits that will bankrupt us. We have trillions of dollars in unfunded liabilities in Social Security and Medicare, and nothing is being done about any of these issues. The Federal Reserve has printed trillions of dollars that will ultimately lead to hyperinflation and higher interest rates.

Our economy is stagnant right now. We're going nowhere fast. We're sort of muddling along...just like Europe. Obama wanted us to be more like Europe, and he got us there with his deliberately destructive



socialist progressive policies that the liberal Democrats have all seemed to embrace. He's saddled the economy with a massive takeover of our healthcare system that will result in a host of new taxes for businesses and individuals in 2013 and beyond, and no one really knows about this and no one is talking about it and no one seems to care about the impact Obamacare is going to have on the economy. But one thing is for sure, Obamacare is going to have a giant sucking sound on the economy, and that's only going to put us further and further in the tank.

There are a whole host of places that are growing and performing better than the United States right now and that have been doing better than us for the last few years. Did you know that we rank about 160 in terms of GDP growth compared to other countries? That means that there are about 160 other countries whose economies grew at a faster rate than the United States last year. Pretty sad, isn't it? And we're the world's superpower economically? Hard to believe given that statistic. We don't have to be at the top of the list every year, but 160?

Our best days are well behind us. With all of our political and economic problems, how can we be the world's superpower? We're being eclipsed each day by other countries, such as China. The administration is making it harder and harder each day to do business here in America, but guess what, it's real easy to do business in China. We're becoming less competitive as a nation, and China is becoming more competitive. They're producing products of higher quality at a lower price than we can here in the U.S.. We're falling behind in terms of a well-educated and productive workforce; our labor force is becoming lazier and lazier, working less and less, and getting dumber and dumber. Hell, the majority of our people want to sit at home and play video games and have a government check sent to them or a check from mommy and daddy. We're not keeping up with the rest of the



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world in productivity, work ethics, or education and we still think we're the world's superpower?

No, my friends, we're done as a superpower. We're losing our influence in the world each and every day. We're losing respect from other nations but more importantly we're losing our self-respect.

**13) What are your thoughts on the Congress and the job it is doing?**

The Congress is much like the rest of our government right now...a vast embarrassment. We've got a president who doesn't know how to lead; he's like a spoiled little kid who stomps his foot down and says, "No, Mommy, I'm not going to eat my vegetables!" His election day win has only elevated his arrogance to new levels. He thinks he has a mandate to push his own liberal agenda down the throats of the American people. He's hasn't shown much concern about doing what's right for the country and all the people. No, he's more concerned about forcing his ideology upon the rest of us. He's like the schoolyard bully, and the Congress are like a bunch of little wimps that are scared of him and are afraid to stand up to him.

Hell, shut the government down. It isn't working the way it is, and if this is the only way to save money, so be it. Let's go over the cliff and get it over with then start getting our finances in order.

We've got a Congress that just keeps fighting back and forth. The Senate doesn't know what's going on; they're all sitting around on their hands doing nothing. The House is fighting amongst itself. If these people really cared about the good of the nation, they wouldn't be taking us down this road to financial ruin. We wouldn't be debating this fiscal cliff issue. We wouldn't be running trillion dollar deficits.



The sad reality is that the Congress doesn't want to cut spending. Everyone there has only one objective on their minds—preservation of power and re-election. Not one of them is willing to go back home to their constituents and tell them funding got cut for some local programme. They're not willing to take that kind of heat and jeopardize their re-election prospects, so they're just going to keep bringing home the bacon to their districts with no regards for the financial well being of this nation. They'll do and say whatever it takes to keep their positions of power. It's a sad indictment of the Congress, but it's the reality of the world we live in.

These are supposed to be smart people on Capitol Hill, right? Well, when you're in the Congress and the Congress overall has an abysmal approval rating down in the 20% range, don't you think you'd get together with everyone else and say, 'We've got a problem here. Why do we have such low approval ratings?' But see, the members of Congress may have high approval ratings in their districts at home, so why should they care what the rest of the country thinks about the Congress as a whole.

It's just really sad that our country is in the mess it's in and the Congress seems to be sitting up on Capitol Hill playing the violin. There's no incentive for the Congress to get anything done. They're still getting their fat paychecks and kickbacks from lobbyists and special interest groups. Oh, wait, we're not allowed to say that, are we? That's all hush hush.

Maybe it's high time we gave them some incentive, like you don't get paid until you've solved our nation's problems. Or why don't we let the people vote on their pay? Every year the voters in each district get a survey in the mail and get to check the box next to the pay they feel their congressman deserves...\$0, \$18,000, \$45,000, \$75,000, \$120,000 or their full pay? Or how about term limits? Would that give them some



incentive to actually do the work of the people, knowing that they don't have to run for re-election so they have nothing to gain by playing politics in Washington?

**14) What criteria should the U.S. use in assessing military intervention in other countries?**

I'm not one for foreign excursions unless we absolutely have to. And then, I don't support putting troops on the ground. I think the best strategy in Afghanistan and Iraq and anywhere else is just to bomb the hell out of them. We can attach the bombs to unmanned drones now so we don't even have to have the Air Force guys flying into harms way. Just bomb these people into submission.

Oh, but wait, that doesn't play well with the public because innocent people get killed. Well, life sucks then you die. If you're living in one of these countries with the bad guys running the show, that's the risk you run. I'm sorry that innocent people would get cashed out, but that's just the way it is. Are the lives of the "innocent" civilians in Iraq and Afghanistan more valuable, more precious than the lives of our young men and women in the military who have made the ultimate sacrifice on these far away battlefields. My friends, I put the lives of Americans first.

What would it take for us to get involved somewhere? A very clear threat to us or our interest from the bad guys. I wouldn't get involved in Syria. Now, if they attack our friends in Turkey, then it's time we bomb Syria out of existence. If the Syrians attack our friends in the region whether its Israel or Saudi Arabia or Kuwait, for example, then we bomb them into submission. And if any of these terrorists or thugs in other countries attack our embassies or kill our ambassadors, then we bomb the hell out of them.



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I may be coming across as a war monger, but I'm far from it. I believe in live and let live. If you're not bothering me, I'm not going to bother you. But, if you come up to me and hit me, I'm going to hit you back about ten times harder and I'm going to keep hitting you until you learn a very valuable lesson. What's the old saying, "Speak soft and carry a big stick."

**15) Is a trade war with China looming on the horizon?**

A trade war with China would be the worst thing we could do. I'm tired of hearing everyone bitch and moan about how China is taking jobs from America. The simple fact is that we can't compete with their low wage labor. They're producing goods with every bit as much quality or even better than what we can produce here in America, and they're doing this at a fraction of the cost. American workers aren't willing to work for \$2 an hour. Besides, we've got a minimum wage law that sets wages at levels that make us less competitive than manufacturers in other countries.

But who's benefiting from this low wage labor in China? The consumers. They love being able to go to Wal-Mart or wherever and get quality goods at low prices. If we get in a trade war with China, that all goes away. If we start tacking on tariffs on Chinese goods, the consumers aren't going to be able to get the cheap goods anymore. Prices will end up doubling or tripling or more in many cases. Is that what we want? I doubt it. And here's another sad reality. The vast majority of American consumers don't give a damn if the product is made in China or Mexico or here in the U.S.. There's no economic patriotism among Americans. Too many people are just struggling to survive right now to care where it's made. They're only concerned with prices, and they're not willing to pay more for an American made product. It's sad but true.



Listen, no good would come from a trade war with China. The consumers will suffer. Our economy will suffer, and ultimately America as a whole will suffer. We get into a trade war with China and they may just stop buying our debt. Then what are we going to do? Interest rates will rise rapidly and an economy that's already in the tank will be further in the tank. Is this the path we want to take?

**16) Is a strong Europe in the best interests of America? Should the U.S. be involved in stabilizing Europe's economy?**

If the Europeans can't take care of themselves, it's their own damn fault. Decades of failed socialist policies have bankrupted just about every country in Europe. You can't permanently sustain with the government giving people more and more and then turning around and taxing people more and more. They wonder why there are no jobs in France and Italy and Spain and Greece. No one wants to do business there because of the tax rates and the labor laws. They're plain uncompetitive, but they don't understand that. Cradle to grave socialist policies come at a cost—high taxes that make your economies uncompetitive and lead to stagnation and decline. We should be learning from the mistakes of the Europeans instead of trying to emulate them.

No one is flocking to Europe to do business are they? We shouldn't be bailing out any of these European countries. I refuse to believe that the world economy is going to collapse if Greece goes bankrupt or if Spain goes bust or anyone else over there. But I'm a fair man, and I like to give people options, particularly when it comes to business. So how about this proposal? With these countries in Europe that are having financial woes, we'll offer to forgive the debt they owe us, but for every dollar of debt we forgive they send back to the U.S. Treasury ten times the amount of U.S. debt that they hold. For example, the United States holds about \$20 billion of long-term



debt from Spain. So, we forgive their \$20 billion but the eurozone has to send us back \$200 billion of our debt to be retired. The euro currency countries hold about \$2.3 trillion in U.S. Treasury debt, so we could make some pretty good deals if these European countries need our assistance.

That's about the only help I'd offer them. I sure as hell wouldn't give them any cash money or make them any loans so they can continue to spend money on their failed socialist policies and programmes. That's just like throwing money away, and why should the American taxpayers be on the hook for the irresponsibility of the Europeans. The money the federal government has already given away in assistance to the Europeans belongs to the American taxpayers not the politicians. If they're going to burn our money on the Europeans, I'd rather they give it back to us and I think most Americans would agree they'd rather spend that money than give it to the Europeans.

**17) Can U.S. corporations compete with those in other countries such as China, India, and Mexico?**

Nope. Ross Perot was right back in the 1990s when he said that NAFTA would make a giant sucking sound on the economy. Factories moved to Mexico by the scores, taking jobs from American manufacture workers. Then along came China and India with huge workforces that are willing to work for slave wages by our standards here in the U.S. But you know what? If it weren't China, India, and Mexico, companies would move their operations to low wage countries in Africa or South America. There's always going to be people throughout the world willing to work for wages that we here in America wouldn't accept because of our standard of living. And businesses here in the United States using domestic workers and paying a fair, livable wage to the workers cannot compete with the cost structure of a factory in China. It is nearly economically impossible to compete with them. So, those jobs have



gone away and they're not coming back here anytime soon.

**18) Should students who finish high school early qualify for free college education?**

I don't favor giving anyone a free ride using taxpayer money. Every kid in America has the opportunity for a free education up to the twelfth grade—funded by the taxpayers. Beyond that, it's up to the individual. Higher education is a privilege not a right. You've got to be willing to work for it and pay for it to some extent.

We need to educate them at an early age that working hard and applying oneself has a lot of benefits in the long-term such as a higher standard of living, monetary benefits, and so on. If you're lazy and shiftless, it's a much less rewarding life and existence. We need to teach kids early about personal responsibility and providing for oneself and one's family as opposed to relying on handouts. Society today, particularly, young people are always looking for short cuts. We need to instill in kids that there are no short cuts in life.

I do agree there should be some incentive for kids to work hard and do well in school. And that incentive needs to come in the form of priority placement for scholarships at colleges and universities. If you graduate early, you can pick where you want to go and they'll be glad to have you. There are plenty of private scholarship opportunities that can be redirected to kids who perform well academically in high school and graduate early.

**19) Has political correctness gone too far?**

I for one am tired of the bullshit political correctness. People are way too concerned about offending someone else and they've used this as an assault on our freedom of speech. Look, I certainly



don't support hate speech, but it's ridiculous when kids in school can't call it 'Indian style' when they sitting on the floor. And it's ridiculous that you can't call someone handicapped or disabled anymore because it may offend someone. What are we supposed to call them? Cripples? Oh, and don't call someone fat. My God, that's so hurtful and offensive. You should see the looks I get from others when I point out some fat ass riding a scooter through Disney World because they're too fat and lazy to walk. And don't use the term 'hold the fort down' lest we offend an Indian. Can't call a midget a midget anymore. It's bullshit!

And how about the assault on our Christian values and Christmas. Can't say Merry Christmas anymore because you might offend a Muslim or an atheist. I don't get offended if someone tells me Happy Hanukkah just because I'm not Jewish. I think it's great; they're spreading the cheer, goodwill, and good tidings they associate with their preferred holiday. And it's ridiculous that we're letting atheists dictate that we can't display nativity scenes or Christmas trees or Christmas decorations. It's an assault on my values. It's an assault on American's foundational values. And it's an assault on my freedom of speech, my First Amendment right guaranteed me by the Constitution.

Quite honestly, if people don't like it, they can suck it. Get thicker skin. If you're overweight and don't like getting referred to as fat or obese, then lose some weight. Throughout my life I've been referred to as 'Stringbean' on numerous occasions. Did I get offended? No. Was it hurtful? No. Did I find it funny? Yes!

People need to get over this issue, and the media needs to quite pushing it like it's an important topic in America. We're \$16 trillion in debt, our economy sucks, and our political system is a bit dysfunctional right now. Don't we have more important problems than



worry about calling someone fat or saying Merry Christmas?

**20) Should schools incentivize students for good test scores?**

Financial incentives are a horrible idea. I've long supported schools being run by the military. That's not to say they are military schools, but they should be run by the military. What's that going to accomplish? Discipline. And there's a pretty powerful incentive to do well in school. If you do well, you don't have anything to worry about. If you don't do well because you're lazy, the military has a solution for you. No more of this passing kids just because you don't feel you can hold them back. If you don't pass because you're lazy, you're going to have a little boot camp over the summer courtesy of the military. Thus, there's a consequence to being lazy and shiftless.

Now I know that some of you are going to immediately have the reaction that some kids aren't learning because of the teachers in the schools. That may be the case some of the time, and when it is, we need to make sure that teachers aren't failing students. Listen, there are a lot of good teachers out there, but education is a two way street. And anyone that wants to learn and has the will to learn can learn and can be taught. Sadly, when a kid is failing it's immediately the teacher's fault. Maybe that teacher isn't connecting with the student. Maybe another teacher in the school can connect better. We need to have better assessments of the scholastic aptitude of students and get them in the classes that best suit them.

Success and the satisfaction that comes from a job well done should be incentive enough to do well in school. And I'll even go out on a limb and say maybe an occasional pizza party or ice cream party for students with good grades. But I believe that rather



than just rewarding or incentivizing students we need to have consequences and punishment for laziness and dereliction.

**21) What role did the media play in the 2012 election?**

I think the media in this country is pretty disgusting. None of them have any credibility anymore, and I don't care which network you're watching, they're all propagandists. They're not on TV to report the news. Their sole purpose is to promote a political agenda, and sadly most of them are supporting the liberal socialist progressive agenda in this country. Ultimately, they will be the demise of this country, but this is what you get when you have 24 hour news coverage and comedians who think they're credible news casters or journalists and an American public that is so gullible as to believe everything they hear on TV or read in the newspaper or read online.

It's really just disgusting to have sat and listened day in and day out to the liberal media making Obama sound like he's the greatest thing since sliced bread. He might be a really nice guy, and I think he'd be a great host of the Tonight Show. But, he's a horrible leader and a failure of a president. This guy is worse than Jimmy Carter, but the media has put him on this pedestal and given him a god-like status. You can't say anything bad about Obama or you're a racist. You can't disagree with him or his policies or you're an evil rich person or you're stupid.

We need the media to report the facts and just the facts. For example, give us the facts and show us the photos of what happened in Libya. Don't editorialize anything. Just tell us the facts. If you want to ask questions, great, but don't give us your opinion or editorialize the issue with a political bias. Tell us the facts and statistics on the economy. For example, gas prices were under \$2 when Obama took office and since then they're up 50% to 100% in some places.



Those are just simple facts. Don't try to explain away the price increase or give us excuses. Just give us the facts.

Sadly, we'll never have that. News organizations in America have lost their credibility. They're only interested in promoting a liberal socialist progressive agenda and brainwashing the public in accepting this philosophy.

**22) What are the biggest social issues in America today?**

Everyone talks about abortion and legalization of drugs and gay marriage, but those aren't really important issues. They're just distractions. The degeneration of American society is the biggest problem. That's the big issue that no one wants to talk about. Everyone acts like our society is so great, but it really sucks. Family values have fallen by the wayside. We've got more and more kids being brought up in single parent households or in households where they're basically on their own. They're not getting much guidance in the department of what's right and wrong, and they're certainly not getting that from TV or the movies.

There's this overbearing sense of entitlement among young people. They're lazy and spoiled. They want everything handed to them without having to work for it. And you know what the excuse is? Oh, it's hard for them. It's different now. You've got to keep up with the Jones or you'll get poked fun at in school and that damages them psychologically. Or, they come from a broken home, so mommy or daddy has to make them feel important by giving them everything they want to make up for not having the other parent in the house. And all that does is make the kids more messed up.

People have grown materialistic and self-centered. They're all about me, me, me and what can you do for me. There's no more 'Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country.'



Today, it's all about what can the government give me or do for me. Where's my freebies? They want more and more material goods as if that's going to fill a void in their lives.

Society is turning away from faith and foundational values which is leading to this void in their lives that they're trying to fill with material goods. It's a lost cause. The happiness from material goods is ephemeral not permanent.

There's a general apathy about what's going on in this country. People don't care about what the politicians are doing to this country. They go about their daily hum drum lives and don't worry about it, but they'll bitch when something affects them directly. They're not educated about the issues and where we are in America and what's happening and how we got here and what needs to be done to correct the situation.

Oh, there's a lot more that we could go into, but I think I've made my point. It's a real sad indictment of American society, and we've got to change the course we're on if we want to get America back on track.

**23) 2016...Are you willing to make any predictions on the Democrat presidential nominee and Republican nominee?**

If some of the new faces or speakers at the Democratic National Convention and the Republican National Convention are any indication of the future of the parties, I don't think there's much hope for our country. We're four years out so it's a pretty hard thing to predict. A lot can happen between now and then and a lot of new faces can burst onto the scene.

On the Democratic side, I think we'll see a couple of people come to the forefront. Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa is a name that keeps getting mentioned. I wouldn't be surprised if someone like former Virginia Governor Tim Kaine or Colorado



Governor John Hickenlooper get in the mix. Newark Mayor Cory Booker gets some TV time now and then. And I wouldn't be surprised if Rahm Emanuel tries to get the nomination. I don't think Hillary Clinton is going to get involved. I think she's pretty well done. I don't know that a mayor from San Antonio would be seen as a credible candidate for President of the United States. I don't think the party establishment would allow that. Today, I'd say it's probably going to be Tim Kaine.

On the Republican side I think Ted Cruz the newly elected Senator from Texas is going to be in the mix. I also like Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. She is a brilliant and likable woman, and I also wouldn't hesitate to get behind her. Unfortunately, I don't think she has any interest or ambition to be President of the United States. I think the same goes for former Florida Governor Jeb Bush, but I would not discount the possibility of that. Marco Rubio seems to be the darling of the Republican party right now along with Paul Ryan, but I don't think the latter is a credible candidate. And I certainly hope the Republican party doesn't even consider some slob like Chris Christie who was Obama's best friend just before the election. You've got Virginia Governor Bob McDonnell, John Thune the Senator from South Dakota and Susana Martinez the Governor of New Mexico. And listen, Rick Perry could make another run at it. If I could only pick one person today, it would probably be Ted Cruz.

Of course, I think the parties have already selected who's next in line, we in the general public just don't know it yet. And let me also qualify my previous comments by saying this only matters if Obama's supporters don't find a way to allow him to run for a third term or if he doesn't find a way to make himself king or dictator or emperor or whatever title he wants.



Just remember, a lot can happen in the next four years. Obama has given the office of the President a lot of powers via executive orders including the power to take over energy infrastructure, private property, etc. And why is the Department of Homeland Security the biggest purchaser of ammunition? And we've got a huge movement for tougher gun control in America. How long before they find a way to effectively take away our second amendment right to bear arms? And what happens when we are forced to have financial austerity here in America? We've seen the rioting and burning cars and buildings in Europe where they've had to resort to austerity measures to get their finances back on track? Think it can't happen here? When the hand outs stop, these people will rise up and just take what they want from anyone. We're one click away from a real class civil war in America where those without take what they want by force from those that have. It's a scary prospect, but it can happen.

**24) More and more states and municipalities are facing bankruptcy. Is it up to the federal government and taxpayers to bail them out?**

Managed bankruptcies are the answer not federal taxpayer bailouts. Why should the taxpayers in states where legislators have been financially responsible be forced to bailout states like California that haven't been financially responsible and have been economically hijacked by unions?

Individuals and companies go bankrupt each and every day. They go through the legal process of reorganization or liquidation. Let state or local government go through the same legal process of reorganization. That's the only way places like California are going to get their finances in order. The bankruptcy court would void employment contracts with unions and force a renegotiation that is in the best financial interests of the taxpayers.



No bailouts for states or municipalities! In fact, I don't think the federal government should be bailing any business or any industry or anyone else out.

**25) What are your thoughts on early voting and voting procedures in the U.S.? Is it time for reform?**

It's clearly time to reform the voting system...that is if you believe our voting in the election matters. I think we're given the illusion that our vote counts but that the elections are decided in advance. That's beside the point. If we're operating on the premise that our elections are indeed free, open, and fair, then yes we do need to reform the system.

It is unacceptable that people have to wait in long lines for hours to vote. And actually, I think that Election Day should be a national holiday every two years. When I was a kid, we didn't have school on Election Day, and I remember that a lot of businesses were closed so you didn't have to worry about not being able to vote or taking off work or missing work. We need to close the schools and make them polling stations. There's no shortage of schools so we can have more polling stations. I think we have lines at polling stations because schools are in session so they have to use community centers or churches or whatever as polling stations.

We have to eliminate fraud in the electoral system. We know it went on in 2008. The entire Dallas Cowboys football team voted in Ohio...but they're not from Ohio. What's wrong with this? It just gets swept under the rug. We've got illegals voting, and if you don't think that's going on, you're not living in the real world. We've got people voting multiple times thanks to early voting. It's ridiculous. We criticize the election fraud in other countries, but it's going on right here at home. It's hypocritical!

We have the best technology in the world, and we're still using a system of voting that allows for fraud.



We need to ensure that every person who goes to vote has a valid ID. If you object to having to show photo identification to vote, you must support election fraud and you're probably a subversive. Then, let's get the technology that enables voters to vote via their phones or online or in person if they want to. Maybe there's a one use code that you get to put into the machine or something.

Of course, I'm also in favor of making folks answer random basic questions about American civics before they can vote too. So, maybe you have to answer the questions first and pass then enter the code then vote. The technology is there to ensure a better voting process, so let's figure it out and clean up the election process.

**26) What is your outlook for the economy? What do you perceive to be the biggest threat to the U.S. economy?**

I say let's take the bus off the damn cliff and get it over with. That's going to be about the only way we get the Congress to cut spending. Otherwise, they'll put off spending cuts for a while and increase taxes to fund the deficit. Then, they'll conveniently forget about the spending cuts. Where are all the spending cuts that were supposed to happen as a result of the debt ceiling increase deal back in 2011? They haven't happened.

The leadership in Washington is the biggest threat to our economy. They progressive socialist policies being pursued by the Democratic party will take us down the same path as Greece and Spain and Portugal and Italy and so on and so forth. I just don't understand why they can't comprehend this. Bigger government and cradle to grave doesn't work. None of these places have really vibrant economies if you've noticed and they're all bankrupt. Why do they think it's going to be any different here? It won't be different here, but they're only interested in one thing...buying votes. The more hand outs they give, the



more votes they get. And the longer they're in power the deeper and deeper in debt they'll get us and the higher and higher they'll raise the taxes and further and further into the black hole goes our economy. And then, they start dismantling the Constitution and taking our property and taking our money and taking our guns and taking our liberty. Of course, the ones at the top keep their positions of power and their wealth but everyone else has to give it all up for the good of their fellow comrades. Sound familiar?

We need to get back to some basics. We need to shrink the size of the federal government; it needs to drastically cut programmes and spending. We need entitlement reform—real reform and not the kicking the can down the road reform that we've always gotten. We need reform of the tax code so that there isn't a disincentive to be successful. But more importantly, we need to change the philosophy of a large number of Americans who believe that the government is there to give them handouts. We need to break and stop the cycle of dependency people have on the government. It's not easy because it will require sacrifice, and we all know that people in this country don't generally want to make sacrifices.

We need some common sense in Washington. Individually we cannot spend more than we make for a long period of time. Oh, we can max out credit cards, but when the cards are maxed, you can't spend anymore. Washington needs to realize that it can't spend more than it takes in. Only in Washington can you suspend economic reality and budget an increase in expenditures each and every year even when you know revenues are lower and lower or insufficient to cover the expenditures. It's asinine.

But here again, no one in Washington has the guts to tell any department that they have to cut spending. How about telling each department that they have to reduce spending this year by 2% across the board? They can probably find that much waste in each



department each year to save the taxpayers' money. No, the Democrats just want to increase taxes. Let's just raise taxes and we don't have to cut spending. Let the rich and successful people pay more; they don't pay enough. The rich and successful are evil people. They deserve to have their ill gotten money taken from them and given to people who are lazy and shiftless and who haven't done anything to better themselves.

It's disgusting to have to sit back and watch these idiots in Washington just squander our money. They don't seem to understand that the money they're spending isn't their money. It's the taxpayers' money. It's money coming right out of the pockets of hardworking Americans who go to work every day and who struggle to make a living for their families.

Here's an idea. Let's take all the millions of dollars from the people in the Congress and put them to work in a minimum wage job somewhere. Let them see what it's like for normal people. No Washington, DC high society. No staffers. No perks. No free lunches. No being wined and dined by lobbyists. Let's let them work flipping burgers and see how hard it is to make a living while we take money out of their paychecks to waste. Maybe it's a dose of reality that these politicians with their heads in the clouds need. Anyone like that idea?

**27) Does the U.S. have a moral obligation to help other countries financially?**

We have no moral obligation to give money to any other country. We have enough people in America to take care of. When we've eliminated homelessness and hunger in America, then we can consider helping others throughout the world. I feel bad for the people living in poverty in Latin America, Africa, and Asia, but I feel worse that we have children and elderly here in America going to bed hungry at night. I want my tax dollars going to help my fellow Americans, and



I would argue that we have a moral obligation to help our fellow citizens before we go helping citizens of other countries. Besides, with the financial situation our country is in, we don't have any discretionary money to give to other countries.

**28) Debt relief for poor countries?**

A lot of third world countries or highly indebted poor countries that have been given loans from first world countries will never have the capacity to pay them back, so effectively it's debt on the books that won't ever be collected. I don't object to forgiving foreign debt, but we need something in return. If they've got natural resources, we can take a portion of those. If they've got a strategic position, they may just need to provide us with outsourced intelligence services or something of that nature.

Greece could be considered poor at the moment given their financial situation. If they or their friends in the EU want debt forgiveness, let's make a deal whereby they return \$10 of our Treasury debt or every \$1 of their debt that we forgive. Think there would be any takers?

**29) With recent developments in Michigan, are unions going to become obsolete?**

I'm not sure that unions will ever be totally obsolete or will ever disappear, but I do wish they would go away. They've outlived their usefulness. They were developed at a time when there were no laws or regulations pertaining to worker safety, and they served a useful purpose about a hundred years ago. Now, we got plenty of regulation regarding workplace safety, and unions have become economic terrorists, holding companies hostage by threatening to strike in order to extort more money from the company.



And I've got to say that I often wonder about the mentality of people in unions. Do they not realize that someone is getting rich off their union dues they pay each month? It's just a vast business enterprise, and the workers just keep giving their hard-earned dollars to the union bosses and machines. The union is there to take the money but how many workers ever get to cash in on the union dues? Does the union help members who are facing foreclosure? Haven't heard about that. Did the union save the workers' jobs at Hostess? Nope. Did the unions save the jobs in the steel industry? No. Where's the union when you need them? I mean, really, you've got to be pretty much brain dead to belong to a union in this day and age. But if you look at the kind of people in the unions, you'll see that they're predominantly supporters of a progressive socialist agenda so it's no surprise they lack the mental capacity to understand they're being taken advantage of.

**30) With the recent Sandy Hook school massacre, is it time to reconsider the issue of gun control?**

No more gun control! The solution is real simple: Give everyone a gun and let them carry it in a holster just like in the Old West. Then you know who has a gun. If you go crazy or try to pull a stunt like the massacre in New Town, you might get one or two people but then someone else is going to take you down. That would really level the playing field when it comes to guns.

I understand how emotional this issue is for people. These tragedies are terrible, but you can't stop every rogue killer. And I agree that there is no practical use for assault rifles today, and I know we've talked a lot in the past and it has come up at some of the champagne summits we've had here about the original intent of the Founding Fathers. They were living in a time when you had muskets and flintlocks, and some people use that to argue against assault rifles. But here's what we need to consider.



The original intent of the Founding Fathers in drafting the Constitution and the Second Amendment was to ensure that the people had the ability to defend themselves against tyrants. In those days, having muskets or flintlocks put you on a level playing field with everyone else. No one had machine guns or superior weaponry. Our technology has evolved significantly. If we're still to bear arms to protect ourselves from tyrants, we have to have access to comparable technology. A six shooter or a pistol isn't going to do much when the stormtroopers comes to your neighborhood with assault rifles. Of course, we can't do much against tanks or missiles or bombs, but at least we have arms that are of a comparable nature as the forces of would-be tyrants. Dictators and tyrants love an unarmed populace. They're not threat to the powers that be. We must not allow ourselves to ever be put in a disadvantaged position of protecting ourselves from a dictator or tyrant.

Now, having said that, I would be much in favor of requiring every person who owns or wishes to purchase any firearm to go through the necessary concealed weapons class or registered weapons class and undergo the stringent background checks. Let's not address gun control by limiting our access to guns but rather let's address gun control by ensuring that the people who do purchase and own guns are properly trained and screened. We will never prevent tragedies from happening. Someone or something is always going to slip through the cracks, but we can make it less likely with proper screening and permitting while respecting the right of law abiding citizens to maintain their arms.

**About Mr. Cartwright**—Digger Cartwright is the author of several mystery stories, teleplays, and novels including *The Versailles Conspiracy*, a modern day political thriller, *Murder at the Ocean Forest*, a traditional mystery novel set in the 1940s, *The House of Dark Shadows*, a psychological thriller, and *The Maynwarings: A Game of Chance*, a mystery set in the Old West. Mr. Cartwright is also a noted



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