

Charles Grant on Tax Cuts, Federal Spending, and Debt

Charles Grant (1882-1964) was a carpenter, father of 11 children, and my grandfather. He and my grandmother were from the mountains of Tennessee. He was “illegitimate” in a time when that really had a social impact. His stepfather beat him. His uncle rescued him and raised him. My grandmother and he grew up in Winfield. She must have fallen in love with the man he was in his soul. He played the organ in their small church. He had only an eighth-grade education, but he loved to write poetry. He taught himself to read blueprints and became a foreman, helping build dams along the Ohio River while they lived in West Virginia. They moved north to the Akron/Massillon Ohio area, my mother’s birthplace.

My grandparents grew a lot of their own food. The Sunday chicken. They planted fruit trees in each new home. They had a garden. Dandelion salad. Self-sufficient when more people had a little land. They put up fruits and vegetables for the winter. He’d built shelves under the basement stairs to store them in their last Ohio house before they moved to Phoenix. When Depression-era hobos showed up at their door, they gave them food. Despite hardships, both grandparents remained very compassionate. He was a gentle giant.

My mother gave me this opinion piece he had scribbled on a piece of paper. Written toward the end of his life, I’m guessing. As Charles’ family grew, he built bigger homes. During the Depression, he couldn’t make the mortgage payments, and the bank foreclosed on the house. The bank learned that he had a large family, but they found out too late to stop the foreclosure process. Charles Grant knew about income, expenditures, and debt.

What I found remarkable in his personal Opinion is that he could understand the nation’s budgets. How budgets are built on income and expenditures. Whether in Washington or on the home front, it’s simple math. There was nobody to bail him out. Debt creates a burden.

Here is his metaphor. A copy of his original note is in the next link.

“What is the backbone of our country? The blood stream of our economic system? It is the national income. What is our national income composed of? Taxes, of course.

Everyone will agree that we should get a reduction in taxes, but we would have to be pretty ignorant not to agree that we should have to offset that by a reduction in national expenditures.

The wonderful wizards of Washington granted our \$ eleven billion tax reduction, and now they want to add on another \$ 9 billion to our nat[ional] debt, which adds up to \$ 20 billion deeper in the hole, in any man’s figures.

It’s like cutting off a beagle’s tail, inch by inch, to keep from hurting him so bad, then feeding it to him, inch by inch to keep him from getting hungry.”