



CITIZENS for Limited Taxation

The Commonwealth Activist Network

Post Office Box 408 □ Peabody, Massachusetts 01960 □ Email: cltg@cltg.org □ Website: <http://cltg.org>

Barbara Anderson (617) 248-0022 □ Chip Ford (781) 631-6842 □ Chip Faulkner (508) 384-9672

To: Speaker Thomas Finneran
cc: Members of the General Court
March 2, 1999
Re: "First Step Program"

Dear Mr. Speaker,

We are intrigued by your idea of providing a culture basket to newborn Massachusetts babies, though we would like more information. Our first question is, who will decide what goes into the basket?

You like Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. I like Richie Haven's "Freedom" from Woodstock. Liberals like John Lennon's "Imagine." Labor might want Joan Baez singing "Joe Hill," while Business chooses the Rolling Stones doing the iMAC commercial.

Your book might be A Child's Biography of Winston Churchill. Others might prefer The Little Red Book of Chairman Mao. I'd pick "The Little Red Hen." You see the problem.

Nevertheless, we are not naysayers; we understand what you are trying to do. In fact, we would like to contribute.

We think it is important that children learn basic moral as well as cultural lessons. For example, we hope they are given a selection of Aesop's Fables. And as part of CLT's "For the Children" project, we are sending you a basket item that can be read to them to teach the importance of keeping a promise.

Since actions speak louder than words, we hope you will set an example for the children of how to keep a promise by including a copy of the repeal of the 1989 temporary income tax increase in your basket.

Best wishes.

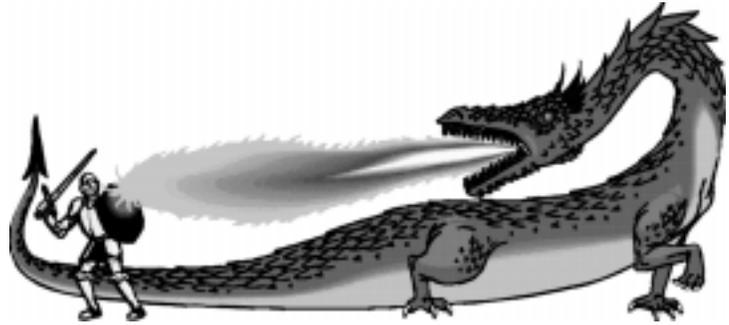
Sincerely,

Barbara Anderson

(Over)

Every Tax is a Pay Cut . . . A Tax Cut is a Pay Raise.

CITIZENS
for
Limited Taxation
“For the Children”
Education Project



Once upon a time the Massachusetts state income tax rate was 5 percent. But then there was a wicked fiscal crisis dragon, that threatened to devour our little commonwealth if he was not fed more taxes.

The Knights of the Beacon Hill went forth into the countryside to collect more money from the peasants, who were promised that the taxes would be temporary, that once the fiscal crisis dragon had been slain the tax rate would return to 5 percent.

Sir Bill, Sir Paul, two Sir Thomases and the other Knights eventually slew the dragon. But then the dragon's wicked ally (Jim) St. George put a spell on the two Sir Thomases, so that they would forget about the promise that the Knights had made!

“I don't recall it, Bir-ming-ham.” “Well, I don't either, Fin-ner-an.”

“Did we make it in the spring? Did we promise anything?”

“I didn't make it in the fall. I doubt that it was made at all!”

Sir Paul went forth to find the magic potion that would restore their memory. Red Hair and the Merry Taxpayers helped him search. After many adventures and battles, Sir Paul and the Taxpayers returned to Beacon Hill with the potion.

The beautiful Princess Jane served it with green eggs and ham to the two Sir Thomases, who were released from their spell and remembered the promise that the tax increase would be temporary. “Knights of the Beacon Hill must always keep their promises” they cried, as they returned the income tax rate to 5 percent. And they and the Merry Taxpayers lived happily ever after.

LESSONS FOR THE CHILDREN

“Promises are the uniquely human way of ordering the future, making it predictable and reliable to the extent that this is humanly possible.” *Hannah Arendt, political philosopher, 1906-75*

“And though he promise to his loss, he makes his promise good.” *Nicholas Brady, 1659-1726*

“He was ever precise in promise-keeping.” *Shakespeare, 1604*

“The woods are lovely, dark and deep. But I have promises to keep, and miles to go before I sleep.” *Robert Frost, 1875-1963*