

***By Russ Pankonin, The Imperial Republican Co-Publisher***

Several weeks ago, I went on a diatribe about the state of our federal government, calling it dysfunctional and divided. My opinion on that certainly hasn't changed. In fact, it's only become more entrenched.

In just a few short weeks, several aspects have only made matters worse. Take for instance a recent 5-4 ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court that will now allow corporations and special interest groups to spend unlimited resources on self-produced ads for or against candidates.

The influences of mega-corporations and special interest groups over politicians already casts a dark shadow on our government. Now, the Supreme Court has opened the flood gates wide open and moved our country further away from a government "by the people and for the people."

I consider myself a keen supporter of First Amendment rights but I don't believe a corporation or special interest group has the same right of free speech that I do as a citizen when it comes to influencing elections with their bundles and bundles of money.

My friend may have suggested the best solution to getting big money and influence out of politics.

Let's ban all forms of campaign spending, advertising and technology. Instead, let's make politicians campaign the way they used to have to do it—face-to-face with the voter.

That's all been lost. As a result, people are fed up with politicians on both sides of the aisle who rely on big money to fuel their election and political machines.

That's one of the reasons the Tea Party movement has begun to take root right now in America. Simply put, Americans are sick and tired of politics as usual.

But if the Tea Party movement looks to former vice-presidential candidate Sarah Palin for their direction and leadership, count me out.

I have no problem with a women becoming president of this great country—just not her.

While the movement is admirable, I can't see it correcting the ills of politics going forward. Politicians, while they say they're listening to the common man, are still beholden to the big money and that changes, any future change will remain elusive.

President Obama promised hope and change, along with transparency and bipartisanship. With a majority in the House and Senate, those issues haven't been a concern.

But now that he has lost his filibuster-proof majority in the Senate all of a sudden, he's talking about how bipartisanship participation can craft a new health care bill and create jobs and spending to bolster the economy. Where was that talk before?

Good or bad, the people of Massachusetts have forced the president's hand by sending a Republican to fill the seat held for more than 40 years by Democratic liberal Ted Kennedy.

Ideologically, I believe President Obama felt he could truly bring about the change to Washington and big government that he promised on the campaign trail.

What he didn't realize was how the political zeal and newfound drunkenness of power by the Nancy Pelosis and Harry Reids of the Democratic Party, countered by the uncompromising partisanship of the Republican Party, could quickly derail those visions.

As Forrest Gump would say . . . "That's all I got to say about that!"

