

## What Is The Answer?

*By Hap Hansen*

Many years ago, when my wife and I started to have children, there were constant messes to clean up. When I opened a dirty diaper and saw the mess, I would run to the sink and retch! Carolyn would clean up the mess. When one of our kids threw up, Carolyn would run to the sink and retch! I would clean up the mess. We compromised. She did diapers and I did vomit. That was our answer to the problem.

Today, the mess that needs cleaning up is our political system. Politics and compromise are 180 degrees apart. As an example, when the Affordable Care Act Bill passed into law, the one we call Obamacare, it got not one single Republican vote. When the Bill we call Trumpcare passed the House of Representatives, it got not one single Democratic vote. Obamacare is failing, Trumpcare is a disaster! What is the answer? May I suggest that we select 10 Republicans, 10 Democrats and a few Independents, half of whom would be women, lock them in a room and tell them not to emerge until the Health Care problem has been solved? Tell them, by the way, that the bathroom door is also locked! Could that be an answer? I hear many complaints about how the government is run, but very few suggestions about how to clean up the mess.

Here's an idea: Our corporate tax rate is the highest in the world. What if Congress told corporations they could bring back the billions of dollars they have stashed overseas with only a ten percent tax liability? There would be conditions! They would be taxed at the ten percent rate only if they do not line their executive's pockets with their returned cash; they must invest those dollars in additional business construction providing more goods and services; they must hire more people and give meaningful raises to all workers; they must increase dividends to millions of Americans who have invested in IRA's, 401k's, pensions and profit-sharing plans. Then and only then, would reducing corporate tax rates be considered. Could this be a partial answer?

I also hear many people say, "Tax the rich, because their tax rates are too low." A few months ago, I read about how we might tax the wealthy. The plan was that up to \$350 thousand of annual income, taxes would remain as they are. All annual income over \$350 thousand would be taxed at a rate of 100 percent! If this happened, the Federal government would get an additional \$750 billion in additional taxes! Unfortunately, that would still not be enough to cover one year's worth of increasing government debt.

What is the answer? We are \$20 trillion in debt. We cannot continue on the same borrowing path. But we cannot allow low-income residents with illnesses to die in the streets. What is the answer? The only one I can think of is a word politicians used to use, but is now impossible in our political system. The word is compromise. Politicians, all of you, Democrats, Republicans, Independents, swallow your silly pride and put away your tired, sad egos and compromise.

We need answers.