

COMMENTS MADE AT A PUBLIC HEARING AT CITY HALL, AT 1:30 P.M. ON THE PRESENTATION OF THE CITY'S BUDGET, OCTOBER 4, 2005

MAYOR TOM BARRETT, THANK YOU FOR GIVING THE PUBLIC AN INPUT INTO THE FORGING OF THE CITY'S BUDGET, BUT YOU KNOW THAT THERE IS REALLY NO ROOM FOR DEBATE AND THAT PUBLIC HEARINGS ON MUNICIPAL BUDGETS ARE REALLY NOTHING BUT CHARADES, A VEILED ATTEMPT FOR CITY GOVERNMENT TO GIVE THE APPEARANCE OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION, BECAUSE THE ONLY QUESTION YOU CAN ADDRESS ON THE BUDGET IS: WHAT SIZE OF CHUNK WILL YOU TAKE OUT OF THE CITY REAL ESTATE PROPERTY. AND YOU REALLY HAVE NO OPTIONS, BECAUSE THE REAL ESTATE TAX IS ABOUT THE ONLY REVENUE PRODUCER TO PAY FOR THE CITY'S NEEDS. (NOT TO MENTION THE TINKERING WITH THE ASSESSMENT LEVELS AND CITY FEES ON A VARIETY OF SERVICES).

OUT OF THE PROPERTY TAX WE PAY FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT, FIRE DEPARTMENT, PUBLIC SCHOOLS, COLLEGES (MTC), WATER, SEWER, SIDEWALKS, STREETS, GARBAGE COLLECTION, YOUR SALARY, THE SALARIES OF THE COMMON COUNCIL AND THE THOUSANDS OF EMPLOYEES THE CITY EMPLOYS.

THERE ARE REALLY NO OPTIONS MADE AVAILABLE TO YOU, BECAUSE THE WISCONSIN CONSTITUTION OF 1848 PROHIBITS YOU FROM TAXING THE BILLIONS OF DOLLARS THAT ARE PRODUCED WITHIN THE CITY'S BOUNDARIES. CYBER SPACE IS PRODUCING BILLIONS, BUT YOU CANNOT TAX IT. BANKS AND INSURANCE COMPANIES ARE PRODUCING BILLIONS, BUT YOU CANNOT TAX THEM, HUNDREDS OF COMPANIES LIKE THE MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL (OVER \$200 MILLION PER YEAR) ARE EACH MAKING MILLIONS UPON MILLIONS OF DOLLARS WITHIN OUR CITY, BUT YOU CANNOT TAX THEM, OUR FREEWAYS BUST AT THEIR SEAMS WITH PEOPLE COMING FROM OUT OF TOWN TO WORK IN OUR CITY, BUT YOU CANNOT TAX THEIR DOLLARS EARNED UNDER THE CITY'S PROTECTION. (THOSE WORKERS DO NOT SPEND THEIR EARNINGS WITHIN MILWAUKEE, EITHER).

THE CONSTITUTION OF 1848 PROTECTS THE COMMERCE AND MANUFACTURER INDUSTRIES FROM HAVING TO CONTRIBUTE TO OUR CITY'S BUDGET, WHICH IN TURN FORCES YOU TO TAX THE ONLY SOURCE AVAILABLE TO YOU; THE REAL ESTATE WITHIN THE CITY'S BOUNDARIES. TWICE AN EFFORT WAS MADE TO AMEND THE 1848 CONSTITUTION AND TWICE IT WAS DEFEATED BY THE HIGH POWERED LOBBY OF THE COMMERCIAL AND MANUFACTURERS' GROUP. IT IS HIGH TIME FOR YOU TO BEGIN THE PROCESS OF TRYING IT A THIRD TIME. THERE'S MORE OF US THAN THEM, BUT THEY HAVE THE WILL AND WE DO NOT.

YOU ARE LEFT TO GADGET AND TINKER WITH THE ONLY OTHER OPTION FOR RAISING MONEY; DREAM OF A NEW FEE AND RAISE THE EXISTING ONES AND AN EXAMPLE OF THAT IS THE CITY PARKING TICKETS. THEY USED TO BE \$5.00 NOW THEY ARE \$15.00; THE PARKING CHECKERS FOR NIGHT PARKING USED TO COME TWICE A MONTH TO CHECK FOR PERMITS AND PARKING RESTRICTIONS.

NOW THEY COME EVERY NIGHT. AND THE CITY'S NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES HAS INCREASED THE NUMBER OF CITY ORDERS (AND ITS FEES) IT ISSUES SO AS TO RAISE MORE REVENUE FOR THE CITY. ANOTHER CREATIVE WAY THAT YOU USE IS THE ASSESSMENT LEVEL.

YOU PLEDGE NO INCREASE IN TAXES AND THAT IS CODE FOR INCREASING THE ASSESSMENT VALUE OF THE PROPERTY SO AS TO GIVE A BIGGER MULTIPLIER. WELL, THIS IS AS CREATIVE AS YOU ARE ALLOWED TO GET BY THE CONSTITUTION OF 1948. IT IS TIME TO CHANGE IT AND USE THE WEALTH CREATED WITHIN OUR CITY TO FINANCE OUR CITY'S NEEDS AND TAKE THE BURDEN FROM THE FAMILY HOME.

WE ARE FINANCING OUR CITY IN THE ANTIQUATED WAY OF 1848, WHEN WISCONSIN BECAME A STATE. THE ONLY SOLUTION IS FOR YOU TO BECOME REALLY CREATIVE (BUT I BET NOT IN YOUR AGENDA): TEAM UP WITH OTHER CITY MAYORS AND LOBBY THE STATE FOR A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ALLOWING YOU TO TAX THE WEALTH OF THE CITY TO MEET THE CITY'S NEEDS.

IF AMERICANS WOULD TRAVEL ABROAD AND SEE MORE THAN THE COASTAL CITIES OF CANCUN, PUERTO VALLARTA AND ACAPULCO, THEY WOULD LEARN THAT A \$100,000.00 HOME IN MEXICO WOULD NOT PAY MORE THAN \$100.00 PER YEAR, BECAUSE A HOME IS THE MOST SACRED PLACE FOR A FAMILY TO LIVE IN. THEY USE THE TAXES ON SALES TO FINANCE THE CITY'S NEEDS. MAYBE WE COULD LEARN SOMETHING FROM THOSE MEXICANS.

LET US USE THAT CREATIVITY THAT WAS HARNESSSED WHEN WE SPENT HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS TO BUILD A STADIUM AND WHICH IS AT WORK WHEN WE SUBSIDIZE SOME BUSINESSES.

I THANK YOU FOR HEARING ME AND NOW YOU CAN SEE THAT THE EMPEROR HAS NO CLOTHES, THAT THIS HEARING IS A CHARADE IN THAT IT ONLY GIVES THE PUBLIC THE APPEARANCE OF PARTICIPATION AND THAT THE ONLY QUESTION FOR YOU IS WHAT CHUNK YOU WILL TAKE OUT OF THE REAL ESTATE PROPERTY WITHIN YOUR JURISDICTION. THE PROPERTY OWNER IS A SITTING DUCK AND MORE THAN THAT, HELPLESS TO SEE YOU TAX IT TO DEATH, BECAUSE THAT IS THE ONLY POWER AVAILABLE TO YOU.

INDEED, THE POWER TO TAX IS THE POWER TO DESTROY AND MANY FAMILIES ARE BEING DESTROYED BY THE WEIGHT OF THE PROPERTY TAX USED EXCLUSIVELY TO PAY FOR ALL OF THE CITY'S NEEDS. REMEMBER THAT OUR HOMES ARE THE HIGHEST TAXED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. AS OUR LEADER, WE EXPECT YOU TO FIND OPTIONAL WAYS TO FINANCE THE CITY'S NEEDS, OTHER THAN THE REAL ESTATE TAX.

  
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SO GROW UP, MILWAUKEE, WAKE UP MAYOR AND THE COMMON COUNCIL. THE CITY OF MILWAUKEE USED TO RELY ON PEOPLE WORKING IN MILWAUKEE TO SPEND THEIR PAYCHECKS IN MILWAUKEE. THIS IS NO LONGER TRUE. THE SUBURBS HAVE BECOME AS PARASITES ON MILWAUKEE AS THE HOST. THEY STORM MILWAUKEE TO WORK, BUT THEY TAKE THEIR PAYCHECKS TO THE 20 OR SO SUBURBS AROUND MILWAUKEE. THEY HATE MILWAUKEE. THEY WILL NOT SEND THEIR CHILDREN TO OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN MILWAUKEE. BUT THEY MAKE THEIR LIVING BY WORKING IN MILWAUKEE. THOSE WHO CONTROL THE PUBLIC POLICIES OF MILWAUKEE DO NOT LIVE IN MILWAUKEE. I AM CITING THE CEOS OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE IN MILWAUKEE (INCLUDING THE GMA, UNITED WAY, NORTHWESTERN INSURANCE CO., MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL, ET AL.). THEY ALL TAKE THE MONEY FROM OUR RESIDENTS, BUT DO NOT SPEND IT IN MILWAUKEE. WE ARE LEFT WITH RESIDENTS WHO ARE MOSTLY ON SSI, W-2, HOMELESS, LOW PAYING JOBS, ETC. JUST TAKE A WALK ON THE GRAND AVENUE MALL AFTER 5:P.M. AND ON THE 23RD OF DECEMBER AND YOU WILL SEE WHO IS SPENDING THE MONEY IN MILWAUKEE: BLACK PEOPLE AND THE HOMELESS, BOTH WITH LOW PAYING JOBS OR NO JOBS AT ALL.

THEREFORE IT COMES AS NO WONDER THAT THE POLITICAL CLOUT HAS SHIFTED TO THE SUBURBS. THE TAIL IS WAGGING THE DOG. THUS OUR CITIES ARE POLITICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY DEAD. NOW YOU CAN BETTER UNDERSTAND WHY MILWAUKEE IS SUFFERING ECONOMICALLY AND SOCIOLOGICALLY AND WHY THE MURDER RATE IS SO HIGH.