

Dear Santa...

By Roy Minet (Rev. 12/21/18)

Dear Santa,

We know you're very busy and you get lots of requests, so we'll try to keep our list short. Here are a few of the things we'd most like for Christmas.

First, we'd really like more fiscal responsibility. It's troubling that the national debt is now nearly \$22 trillion, which is more than the whole gross domestic product of our country for a year. Interest payments on this debt will exceed \$334 billion this year. Both the debt and interest rates are rising, so this already major budget item is bound to grow fast. This is a concern for the solvency of our nation.

Moreover, it is morally reprehensible to shift the burden of our current flagrant spending forward onto the backs of our children and grandchildren. What kind of parents would max out all their credit cards and then leave that debt for their kids to pay off?

If you have a balanced budget amendment in your bag, Santa, it would make a wonderful stocking stuffer.

We definitely are in favor of maintaining a strong national defense, but we would like an end to all the interminable undeclared wars. Just one of them – Iraq – has cost over two trillion dollars so far. At least as deplorable and morally unacceptable is our armed forces' continuing loss of life and limb, especially when there is no clearly defined objective or end point for any of these military "engagements." We applaud the Syria withdrawal announced by President Trump and hope it is indicative of a permanent policy correction.

Speaking of wars, we would also like an end to the war on drugs. This expensive war has been a failure by any measure, and quite likely, has exacerbated a serious problem. A previous misguided attempt at prohibition (of alcohol) was a similar disaster. That mistake was recognized after a decade of turmoil and reversed. Purely on a practical basis, there's no reason to continue the war on drugs. It hasn't worked.

The required authorization for alcohol prohibition was the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution (subsequently repealed by the Twenty-first Amendment). There has been no amendment to authorize drug prohibition, so the war on drugs is totally unconstitutional.

If you can do it, we'd be extremely happy to have some election reforms. Our governments – both state and federal – have fallen under the control of a class of establishment career politicians. They've certainly voted themselves extravagant pay, benefits and perks. They've rigged our elections to help themselves stay in power. As a result, ninety percent of incumbents are re-elected. And there is only one name on our ballots for far too many "races."

Gerrymandering is the most obvious and easiest thing to fix. Next, would be to greatly reduce the artificial barriers politicians have erected to keep their competition off the ballot. Another important

change would be to replace the plurality voting method (long known to be the worst possible) with a good ranked-choice method (though not instant runoff voting). We should warn you, though, that the career politicians are very adept at making sure that such reforms never make it through the legislative process. Magically, such reforms are always sidetracked for some reason that every politician can claim wasn't his or her fault. A perfect example of that happened this year with a bill that would have somewhat fixed Pennsylvania's gerrymandering problem.

Finally, we'd most like to have world peace. Our definition of world peace would be that every individual's rights to life liberty and property be secured at all times. Everyone would be free to live and let live. Don't tread on anyone. Minimize the use of force on honest and peaceful people.

We realize that we are asking for some big gifts, but we are sure that you would like these things too. We fully intend that these gifts be shared to benefit everyone.

And you won't need to do anything for Democrats and Republicans again this year as they have once again been very naughty. At times they have exhibited total disregard for important, fundamental principles; they have constantly crawled in the gutter calling each other bad names; many positions they take are completely irrational; and they have often acted irresponsibly, failing to accomplish many things that need to be done. Quite a few of them have committed crimes. We're sure you have noted plenty of other scurrilous behavior as well.

Sincerely,

The Nice Libertarians

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