

“Can Anyone Make Government Efficient?”

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By Star Parker

RESTON, Va.—Steve Jobs cofounded Apple when he was 21 years old.

Nine years later, at age 30, he was purged and fired from the company he founded and built by the professional management he helped recruit.

Eleven years later, after that management brought the firm to the edge of bankruptcy, Jobs returned to the helm and saved the company.

In 1997, when Jobs returned as interim CEO, Apple lost \$1.04 billion, and estimates were that it was 90 days from insolvency.

Jobs restored discipline and focus. He slashed the product line from 15 to four products and fired 3,000 employees.

By the end of the next fiscal year, Apple returned to profitability.

Soon, it would bring forth the iPhone and iPad and become the first firm in history with a valuation of a trillion dollars.

Suppose this was government and not a private company. Suppose Jobs needed votes from Congress to cut product lines. Suppose law prohibited him from firing 3,000.

Today there would be no iPhones, no iPads, no Apple Inc. and none of the trillions of dollars of wealth that the company created.

Perhaps every dollar that moves from the private sector to government should have “forever” printed on it.

Estimates are that Elon Musk’s DOGE efforts have achieved some \$150 billion in savings. Although not quite the trillion he said he would achieve, it’s a notable achievement in just three months of work.

The reality, as alluded to above, is that government is by nature inefficient. Efficiency comes from ownership. And in government there is no ownership.

We can't make government efficient, so the objective should be to limit government to things clearly only government can do.

We have a handbook for this. It's called the U.S. Constitution. But even this has been degraded over the years.

Out of \$6.7 trillion in federal spending, \$4.1 trillion is mandatory—automatic. This is the spending that includes our massive entitlement programs—Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and CHIP. It also includes \$881 billion in interest on the federal debt, now bigger than our defense budget.

Of the \$1.8 trillion that is discretionary, that Congress appropriates every year, every single dollar has an interest group behind it lobbying to leave it alone.

Let's also note a big chunk of all the spending—Medicare, Medicaid, welfare and antipoverty programs—stem from the mid-1960s and President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society and War on Poverty.

In 1965, just prior to Johnson launching a new era of big government, federal spending claimed 16 percent of our GDP. Now we're almost at 25 percent.

It's clear that President Donald Trump is operating every day with a deep sense of mission.

For this he should be applauded. The president understands that over the years our country has changed dramatically and dangerously. We've transferred an enormous percentage of our country's operations to government. This means built-in inefficiency in our economy and less growth.

Even with all Trump's efforts, *The Wall Street Journal* notes that in his first 100 days, federal spending has increased by \$154 billion, more than Elon Musk has saved.

It's all increased beneficiary claims in our entitlement programs and interest on the federal debt.

Trump's indefatigable focus and single-mindedness are laudable. But turning the thing around is hard, hard, hard.

He is being ruthlessly attacked by Democrats, who want to keep the big-government machine growing and humming, regardless of how much it hurts the country.

The short-run concern of Trump and Republicans must be the polls.

It's why their priority now must be getting the "big, beautiful" tax bill passed, restoring the 2017 tax cuts.

This will keep the economy growing strongly, which is vital for the polls.

Next priority should then be paring back the massive government creep that damages our country's present and threatens our future.