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By **Darrell Castle** Vice-Chairman Constitution Party National Committee

Last night, January 25, 2011, President Obama delivered his State of the Union address, as he is required by the Constitution to do once each year. Although he covered many different areas, he concentrated on only three: the domestic economy, which includes what he called job creation, domestic policy topics such as education and energy, and foreign policy, which includes military and defense issues.

The President told us that the nation is doing well economically and is on its way to recovery from recession. Evidence of this recovery, according to the President, is the "booming stock market."

My response is that it is utterly ridiculous to say that we are well into recovery because the stock market is booming. Tell that news to the 43 million plus who have to use food stamps to eat. Tell that to the 15 million plus unemployed people. That number would be much higher than 15 million if the government kept honest numbers and counted the people who are no longer looking for jobs. Tell that to the millions of underemployed who used to have good jobs in manufacturing with benefits and who now work in service-related jobs with no benefits.

The President said that we can't live in the past with regard to our economy. For example, it used to take about 1000 jobs to operate a steel mill, but now it only takes 100, so we must adjust to that reality and innovate. What he didn't say is that any jobs in steel are being performed in Korea and other countries and no amount of innovation will change that.

What then is the answer to our economic problems? First, do no more harm with bailouts. Stop

all bailouts and recover any money previously committed to bailouts that has not already been spent. Withdraw from all so-called free trade agreements such as NAFTA, CAFTA, WTO, and GATT which have been largely responsible for the destruction of America's manufacturing base. Remove the regulations and restrictions that prevent businesses from doing business in America and from hiring the people they need to make the things that people want to buy.

Finally, the economy cannot recover until the debt and deficit are resolved through de-leveraging of debt and control of spending. Stop spending more than you take in. It is a simple concept that Americans understand but that apparently their politicians don't. Once the debt and deficit are under control, the President should endeavor to drive a stake through the heart of the entire Federal Reserve system and return to a monetary system based on sound money principles. Stop the destruction of our currency immediately.

The President also told us that educationally we are doing well, but we can do better, so he launched a program called Race to the Top in all fifty states to replace No Child Left Behind. This is also total nonsense. The United States continues to lag behind other nations in math, science, and reading skills. Our system of education, controlled and paid for by the federal government, is a failure and should be scrapped and replaced with state and local control, with primary responsibility left to parents. There is no role for the federal government in education whatsoever.

The nation's energy needs could be met largely by domestic production if we were to allow our own domestic sources of energy to be exploited by repeal of harmful laws that unnecessarily restrain production. Technology will now allow energy exploration and production with minimal damage to the environment. This would prevent the US government from exploring for oil in the Middle East through military force and help foster a more peaceful world.

Finally, the President talked about "shaping" a better world through strengthening NATO and rebuilding our relationship with Russia. He stated that 100,000 of our troops have come home from Iraq with their heads held high. That is also complete nonsense. It's not his job to shape the world, it's his job to protect and defend the Constitution and the American people. Many of those 100,000 troops didn't come home but went to Afghanistan instead. Thousands of others did come home but in boxes or in rehab hospitals.

What then is the foreign policy answer? Issue an order to General Patraeus and the other commanders to execute an immediate withdrawal from Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq. Then

order a military withdrawal from the other 100 nations around the world where we have over 700 foreign bases. That would save many lives, much money, and would create far fewer enemies than we are creating now.

We simply must stop acting as if we own the world or as if we are responsible for it. That would not be isolationism but instead a lack of military domination. The US would trade with all nations who were willing to trade with us. Creditor nations would probably appreciate our new monetary policy whereby they were paid with real instead of counterfeit money.

If the President were to dedicate himself to the ideas proposed in this response to his speech, we would be well on our way to the most dynamic period in American history.