

Response to Charles Madigan:

This is in response to the editorial of Charles Madigan entitled: "Real Protest means sacrifice" which appeared in the April 26, 2009 edition of the *Chicago Tribune*.

In his editorial, Mr. Madigan claims that the April 15, 2009 Tax Day Tea Party Rallies were "ridiculous" since civil disobedience was not used to make a point. He also goes on to write that the Berrigen brothers of the Vietnam era were effective for taking a hammer to the nose of a warplane and burning draft board records with homemade napalm. Finally, he mentions the involvement of Fox News and Newt Gingrich in the rallies on April 15<sup>th</sup> as if the main purpose of the protests were to rip President Obama and to put forward a Republican agenda.

Members of the Libertarian Party of Illinois, as well as other Libertarian organizations and freedom loving individuals throughout the country, took time off from their jobs, brought their families, held signs and distributed literature with a common theme: The rise of the level of taxation and the reach of government into our private lives has gotten to a point where we say: "ENOUGH". The fact that there was no burning or looting of government buildings nor physical violence against people who did not agree with those who attended the rallies does not diminish the importance of American citizens utilizing their constitutional rights to peaceable assembly when they disagree with the direction our leaders are taking the country.

As to Fox News and Mr. Gingrich, I can assure Mr. Madigan that Libertarians do not take marching orders from them, nor from Richard Arme, James Dobson or any other conservative individual or group. We do defend their right to hold their beliefs and welcome any discussion which might uncover common ground on any issue which limits the size of government and maximizes personal freedom.

Will the Tea Parties have a lasting effect? The jury is still out, but with over 700 occurring on April 15<sup>th</sup> and similar rallies in the works, I can't imagine elected officials, be they Republican or Democrat, did not turn on their television or read a newspaper account of the events of that day and not take some notice.

People taking collective action to express their opinions is never "ridiculous".

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