

**President's visit to Republican Retreat:** By now, many of you have probably heard or seen the numerous press reports on the President's visit to the House Republican Retreat in Baltimore, Maryland last Friday. Having been in the room, here's my analysis. This meeting occurred because the Republican caucus issued an invitation for the President to come. I think that this was the right thing to do, in fact I think we ought to always invite the sitting President to our retreat, regardless of their party. The President accepted the invitation. But interestingly, he insisted that the meeting be open to the press and televised. This stands in stark contrast to the fact that his meeting with House Democrats at their retreat was closed to the press. It would appear then, that the President did not want you to hear what he said to Democrats, yet he did want you to hear what he said to us... Hmmmm. So was one a meeting and the other a show?

In any event, our caucus was very respectful. No outbursts or booing and such, and he was welcomed warmly. The message that Republicans were trying to give was that we actually have a lot of positive ideas and an agenda for the future, and that he is misrepresenting the facts when he says that we are the party of no ideas. To that point, Minority Leader John Boehner (R-OH) handed the President a copy of many of those ideas when he arrived. You can see it at <http://www.gop.gov/solutions>

. I would also call your attention to two of my favorite major policy initiatives:

[\*the Patient's Choice Act\*](#)

and the

[\*Roadmap to America's Future\*](#)

The President was clearly trying to message that he has included various Republican-supported ideas in all of his bills that we have voted against, and he was trying to get us to reconsider.

In my opinion, that was a ridiculous request. I am not going to vote for a 2,000 page health care bill that I believe takes the country backwards just because it has 15 pages of policies that I think are OK.

The President spoke for about 15 minutes and then took questions for about 45 minutes. The questions were good and generally pretty tough. But because there were lots of members who wanted to ask questions, there were no follow-ups. The President is clearly a skilled and

competent debater. But it helps when you can ignore the tough part of the question, or blatantly misstate facts, or give a wrong answer without the opportunity for challenge. For example, in his retorts to questions about the budget, he simply had the facts completely wrong.

When all is said and done, however, I think the meeting was a good thing. Many of you know that I am a student of British History and British politics. The House of Commons has a tradition called "Prime Minister's questions" during which the Prime Minister (PM) must field questions in the Chambers on television from members of all parties in Parliament. I have often thought that this would be a good exercise for our Presidents in order to compel them to defend their policies to their critics. This appearance by President Obama was essentially, like a session of "Prime Minister's questions." I hope it is done more frequently.

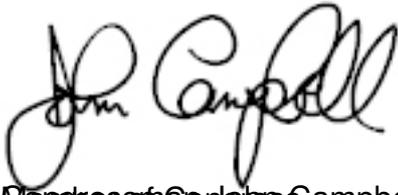
That being said, he did not change our minds, and we probably did not change his.

**President's Budget:** The President today released his budget for the 2011 fiscal year which begins October 1, 2010. It is a monstrosity. It increases spending, taxes, debt, and deficits to levels higher than his previous budget. This is truly unbelievable. Let me reiterate, his budget creates more spending, higher taxes, but still higher deficits, and more debt. In spite of the reductions in spending as the TARP money is paid back, and his meaningless "freeze," goes into effect, this budget manages to add so many new programs and so much new spending that there are in fact, **no real reductions.** Records are being set in so many areas that are bad, that I can't detail them all here. Remarkably, It does all of this with some pretty rosy economic assumptions for economic growth (5.1% this year and 6% thereafter) and interest rates (10 year treasury never rising above 5.3%).

The bottom line is that this budget is not real, it is a work of fiction. Every reputable economist whether they are liberal, conservative, or libertarian, generally agrees that we simply can't sell this much debt over the long term and that this much spending and deficit will cause an economic collapse from which we will no longer have the tools for a quick recovery.

I will have more about this later this week.

Until then, I remain respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Campbell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Congressman Jim Campbell