

OBAMA, TAXES AND FANCY PARTIES

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I recently attended a very interesting event in Houston. It was a Mayoral Forum, but in essence a private reception or “look-see” at the four Mayoral Candidates by the social elite of Houston. Notables such as Carolyn Farb, Joanne King Herring who was played by Julia Roberts in the movie “Charlie Wilson’s War,” two former Ambassadors and many more glitterati were present to try and determine who they might get behind in the race. Houston Chronicle reporter Alan Bernstein dryly said to me when I arrived, “What exactly is this and have you ever seen anything political like it?” He to be sure had not and quite frankly neither had I.

Ladies present were dressed in evening wear and properly adorned with fabulous jewelry. Limousines abounded and the home, owned by a lovely couple had photo after photo with the Clintons all placed in prominent areas. It was the home of a high profile Democrat contributor who was extremely gracious to all and was more of a Hillary fan than Obama. I thought to myself, I’m sure there are lots of Dems here, until of course I started what Dems like to call the conversation, a discussion of issues and candidates with a populace theme and boy did I start a conversation.

One socialite asked me if I was a Republican and I said yes (although I secretly wondered if we have a certain look). She then responded, “God help us all...are there enough of us left to make a difference anymore?” I thought wow...score one for us. Then I met another couple...a major downtown developer and his wife who did not wish to hold back. He said Obama is destroying this country...what are we going to do if all these social programs are put in place...the spending is out of control...foreigners own more of our country than we do and what about taxes and the enormous debt. His wife then coolly added, “Why can’t Michelle Obama wear something decent to meet the Queen of England?” Two more for us.

As I strolled throughout the room, the same words flowed from person after person. This was a dressed up Tax Tea Party. The same issues were on everyone’s minds, even some of the Dems...out of control taxes, spending and the enormous debt we are all staring at. AND SO, WHAT’S THE BOTTOM LINE? We’re worried...we are all worried. Why? This is no longer the America we knew and it’s scary. This administration villainizes business big or small. As one businessmen said, it doesn’t matter where you are on the food chain...you’re getting hit.

So, in a very luxurious and gentle way, this interesting group of people had so much in common, the need to get involved in the process, to make an informed decision and to simply care a little bit more today than they did yesterday about their City and their Country. As a History major this reminds me of the great salons of France with their often thought provoking debate. What I had just experienced was called involvement in a way in which this group was most comfortable and after dinner I left thinking what I had just seen was a very good thing. People want their voices to be heard, all people...at Tax Tea Parties and Fancy Parties and so for us the hope of a new cycle begins.