

Politics Easy as P.I.E. by Bob McEwen (Listen to mp3)

In *Politics: Easy as P.I.E.*, the author, Bob McEwen explains what it takes to have freedom and prosperity. In a very simple, easy to understand booklet, he makes economics completely understandable. He also encourages us to participate in the political process with basic knowledge and confidence.

1. What does the title of the book mean?

The acronym P.I.E. stands for a formula P is for politics, I is for integrity and E is for economics. McEwen says that politics is simply a question of whether decisions are made FOR the people or whether people are allowed to make decisions FOR THEMSELVES. We make that choice when we cast our ballot and thus we should select our political leaders primarily on 2 criteria: integrity and economics. That is, the politician's integrity and his/her economic philosophy. WE, therefore, are ultimately accountable for the success or failure of our country.

2. How do we know which leaders will protect freedom and build prosperity?

Using that same acronym but this time the P stands for principle, the I for impact and the E for explanation we can say that the Principle is: "the higher the taxes, the greater the government's control." The impact is: the more money that's taken from us through taxes, the more limited are our individual choices. The explanation is that when the government takes your money through taxes, it reduces your choices and thereby reduces your freedom.

3. What are the 2 basic economic ideas according to this book?

They are socialism and free enterprise. Socialism is when the government controls everything. On a spectrum with socialism on the far left and free enterprise on the far right, the countries on the far left are the poorest countries in the world. As you move along the spectrum to the far right the wealth of the nations increases and the more freedom citizens have from government control. In other words, the more freedom citizens have from government control, the greater the wealth of the nation.

4. How do we judge where nations are on the spectrum?

The best way is to look at the country's overall tax rate. That is, how much of all that's produced in a country is taken by the government. The governments on the left take the most and those on the right take the least.

In the U.S. up until the 1950's, we were at the 20% mark (that left 80% of what we earned left for ourselves. But today we are at the 40% mark with just about 40% of everything we make going to the government. (That leaves 60% in our pocket). We are inching closer and closer to the side of Socialism. The result is fewer choices, less freedom and ultimately a lower standard of living. And so with every election, we must decide whether to move towards tyranny and government control or towards free enterprise.

5. How do we recognize politicians who are socialists or free enterprisers?

The Left candidates will want more taxes and fundamentally believe the government is more capable of making the best decisions for people than the people themselves. The Right will want less taxes and believe that government should only do that which we cannot do for ourselves such as the development of

a strong national defense to preserve our liberty. Those on the Left also believe that there is a set amount of wealth and they want the government to distribute it so that everyone can share it fairly. The Right understand there is no set amount of wealth and that wealth comes when free people under free enterprise create. But only under freedom are people able to create wealth.