

# The Demonstration Round<sup>1</sup>

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## Connecticut Debate Association

### Novice Scrimmage

### Pomperaug High School

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**Resolved: The U.S. should significantly increase taxes on the rich.**

## A Note about the Notes

I've reproduced my flow chart for the demonstration round from the Novice Scrimmage at Pomperaug High School augmented by what I remember from the debate. The notes are limited by how quickly I could write and how well I heard what was said. Others may have slightly different versions. I'm sure the debaters will read them and exclaim, at points, "That's not what I said!" I apologize for any errors, but I hope debaters will appreciate this insight: what a judge hears may not be what they said or wish they had said.

There are two versions of the notes. The one below is chronological, reproducing each speech in the order in which the arguments were made. It shows how the debate was actually presented. The second is formatted to look more like my written flow chart, with each contention "flowed" across the page as the teams argued back and forth. It's close to the way I actually take notes during the debate.

## The Demonstration Round

The demonstration round at Pomperaug was between the Wilton team of Simon Brewer and Andrew Hunt on the Affirmative and the Pomperaug team of Anjali Dinesh and Michael Moskowitz on the Negative.

### 1) First Affirmative Constructive

- a) Introduction
- b) Statement of the Resolution
- c) A1<sup>2</sup>: The deficit is the key issue facing the United States.
  - i) The deficit is huge, and the interest cost is high and rising
  - ii) US has been downgraded by S&P which will lead to higher interest rates
  - iii) Uncertainty about the future slows down the economy
  - iv) Aff plan will provide certainty
  - v) Only 4 balanced budgets in 60 years, 1 under Eisenhower and 3 under Clinton

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<sup>2</sup> "A1" indicates the Affirmative first contention, "N2" the Negative second contention and so forth.

- d) A2: All Americans must contribute to solving the deficit problem
    - i) Contributions are unevenly distributed
    - ii) 50% don't pay taxes, and 50% pay more
    - iii) The rich, those making over \$1 million, should pay more
    - iv) We propose increasing the capital gains tax to 36%
    - v) While a balanced budget requires spending cuts
      - (1) These fall mostly on the poor, e.g. welfare and Medicaid
      - (2) Therefore the rich must pay more
  - e) A3: Raising taxes on the rich is sound economic policy.
    - i) The rich will invest even if the tax is higher
      - (1) They still want to make money, and still will
    - ii) Rich have a propensity to save, while the poor have a propensity to spend
      - (1) Therefore a tax on the rich will help the economy
- 2) Cross-Ex of First Affirmative**
- a) Cutting spending is worse than raising taxes? Yes
  - b) What about cutting wasteful spending? You can't be sure your only cutting waste.
  - c) What about cutting spending or war? Still worse than raising taxes.
  - d) If we end the wars and cut the military, aren't they well-funded now? You could do that, but the entire military budget is only \$800 billion and the deficit is \$1.1 trillion. You won't solve the problem.
  - e) Haven't we had a deficit for 100 years? But it's gotten bigger in the last 60 years.
  - f) Do we have to fix it, if we have managed to live with it for 60 years? We are approaching the 100% debt to GDP ratio. The deficit is suppressing growth. We are reaching a crisis point.
- 3) First Negative Constructive**
- a) Intro
  - b) Resolution
  - c) N1: Increase in taxes is unfair as rich already pay
    - i) 3% of the population pays 50% of the taxes
  - d) N2: Taxing the rich will worsen our economic problems
    - i) Graph in packet shows revenues higher when tax rates were lower
    - ii) In 1978 when tax rate was high, revenues were low
    - iii) Rich can afford ways to avoid tax
      - (1) E.g. Kerry lives in MA but keeps his yacht in RI
    - iv) Tax is a disincentive to invest
      - (1) Result will be a decline in sales, wages and tax revenues, increasing the deficit
  - e) N3: Increasing taxes on the rich is highly unfair
    - i) Rich are the highly successful
    - ii) Many poor don't pay anything
    - iii) 50% of the population pays no tax; 3% pays 50%
  - f) A1: It is better to reform gov't than to raise taxes
    - i) We have two wars and a recession right now
- 4) Cross-Ex of First Negative**
- a) The top 3% pay 50% of tax, but isn't this nothing to them? No, they have earned it, and it's a lot of money

- b) Can we balance the budget by cutting spending alone? No, but we can't balance it by a significant increase in taxes.
- c) So a tax increase is necessary? Not so that the rich pay an unreasonable amount.
- d) But you agree a tax increase is needed? Some
- e) If you have to pick one, would you raise taxes on the poor or on the rich?
- f) Bush lowered taxes. Wasn't that responsible for the deficit? No. The graph shows lower tax rates yield more revenue.
- g) Didn't Eisenhower balanced the budget and tax rates were 90%? I don't know.
- h) On page 11, doesn't it suggest raising taxes is better?

**5) Second Affirmative Constructive**

- a) Intro
- b) In cross-ex, the Neg admitted you can't solve economic problems by cutting tax alone
  - i) Eisenhower and Clinton both raised taxes
  - ii) We need to raise taxes now
- c) A1: We are approaching a 1-1 debt/GDP ration
  - i) In C-X Neg says we have always had a deficit, but never this high relative to GDP
  - ii) Buffet says taxes on the rich won't lead to doom
  - iii) We need to raise taxes
- d) A3: Buffet says that the capital gains tax has no effect
  - i) The economy is not hurt
  - ii) Rich will invest more to make more to cover the tax
- e) N2: It is illogical to think taxing the rich will worsen our economic problems
  - i) Higher taxes will permit more spending and bring in more revenue
  - ii) Neg conceded that the poor can't afford to pay
  - iii) The poor spend most of what they earn, and still rely on Medicaid and welfare
  - iv) Rich save money in bank accounts

**6) Cross-Ex of Second Affirmative**

- a) Do you agree that cutting spending is needed? Yes
- b) So you agree with need both? Yes, the resolution gives one part of the solution
- c) Do the rich put their money in banks? Yes
- d) Don't banks loan their money out? That's outside the bounds of this debate
- e) Isn't it relevant since it will improve the economy? Tanking money and giving it to others doesn't help Buffet says the rich are just putting it away.
- f) Is Warren Buffet every investor? He's worked with investors, and he believes the capital gains tax is not significant

**7) Second Negative Constructive**

- a) Intro
- b) I will cover the Aff first, then the Neg
- c) A1: We have had a deficit for years. Life goes on.
  - i) Aff has agree an increase in taxes won't solve anything
- d) A2: There are many in the lower tax brackets
  - i) We need to take the middle ground
  - ii) A small increase in taxes spread over lots of people
  - iii) A big tax increase on a small group will not be as effective

- e) A3: Why should Buffet be considered the official word
  - i) Lower tax rates raise more money
    - (1) This is a fact, the way things work
  - ii) Money in the bank leads to loans
    - (1) Taxes take money out of the economy
- f) N1: Aff has not responded to this contention
  - i) Rich work hard and provide 50% of gov't revenue
  - ii) We agree a tax increase is necessary
  - iii) Aff wants to raise taxes on only one group

### **8) Cross-Ex of Second Negative**

- a) Debt to GDP ratio has always been less than one, but now the US rating has been downgraded. Isn't this significant?
- b) Isn't it a sign we must act? No. Not clear it is a critical point. More an issue of the mountain of debt.
- c) If we increase taxes won't it decrease the mountain? Not the ideal we. We've proposed a better solution. In the Bush era we raised revenue by lowering taxes.
- d) Do you think this is true? It was my argument
- e) Was it due to economic growth? There were many factors, but the tax rate was the most important.
- f) Hasn't economic growth fallen to 1%? If there is no growth, how can you rely on a decline in taxes? Increasing growth would be better.
- g) More factors?

### **9) First Negative Rebuttal**

- a) Intro
- b) I will cover Aff then Neg
- c) Raising taxes won't fix the problem
  - i) We have to reform gov't spending
- d) Logic of revenue and tax
  - i) It is a fact that revenue has been higher when taxes were lower
  - ii) We need to reform spending
  - iii) Let the rich keep their money and invest
    - (1) Investment increases growth
    - (2) Growth increases revenue
  - iv) Buffet is not the sole spokesman for the rich
- e) N3: It isn't just to single out the rich
  - i) Aff has never replied to this argument
  - ii) There is a moral argument here: resolution punishes success
- f) Rich bank their money, which banks lend out
  - i) Pays college tuition, other
- g) We should tax something else

### **10) First Affirmative Rebuttal**

- a) I am going to cover a variety of points
- b) N1: the rich don't pay enough, this is proven by the deficit
  - i) Contrast with A2, all must pay their share
- c) N2: Neg misses other factors, especially economic growth
  - i) Right now there is no growth, so if you lower taxes you lower the deficit

- ii) But the deficit is our overwhelming concern
- iii) We need to balance debt at less than 90% of GDP, and that requires a tax increase
- d) N3: It's a matter of math, not punishment
  - i) Everyone must contribute
  - ii) Some gov't programs will go away
  - iii) But it's immoral to cut programs for the poor
  - iv) The rich can afford it
  - v) As to bank accounts
    - (1) Rich can use Swiss and offshore accounts
    - (2) Money is not loaned out, rich seek safety
- e) A1: Deficit is increasing at \$1 trillion per year
  - i) 1-1 debt/GDP signals a crisis
- f) A2: Everyone has to make sacrifices
  - i) Rich can afford to pay
- g) A3: the issue is incentives

### **11) Second Negative Rebuttal**

- a) I want to crystalize the debate
- b) What is the most efficient way to reduce the deficit?
  - i) Taxes won't. Aff has said they won't solve problem
  - ii) Better solution is to reform the tax system
    - (1) Marginal increases in tax rates
    - (2) Major changes to promote growth
- c) A2 clashes with the resolution
  - i) Aff puts all burden on the rich
  - ii) Better to raise taxes on all, say 0.5%, including the middle class
  - iii) Many today are not taxed
  - iv) Aff wants one tax increase

### **12) Second Affirmative Rebuttal**

- a) There are three main issues: morality, the deficit and economic feasibility
- b) Morality
  - i) The choice is between the rich, who have money in the bank
  - ii) Or the poor, where you would have to cut welfare
- c) The Deficit
  - i) First time the US has been downgraded
  - ii) Sign that course change is needed
  - iii) Neg has not replied to this aspect of having a deficit forever
- d) Economic Feasibility
  - i) Neg never discussed capital gains
  - ii) Buffet says it is feasible
  - iii) No one likes paying a tax, but this is the most feasible tax
  - iv) Rich may have to do more deals to make the same money, but won't choose not to invest
  - v) There will be increased economic certainty
    - (1) This will lead to a lower deficit
    - (2) We will know where we are going