John Locke, a brilliant 17th century English philosopher and economist, described the Law of Unintended Consequences in one of his early essays.

He called this law “The Unseen Hand” because it is always working, night and day, clear weather or foul, twenty-four hours a day. Although this law applies to all of us, it applies most especially to politicians.

Most politicians like to work the system to their benefit. They believe that if they work it just right that they can get enough people to vote for them to stay in power.

They love to make their constituents happy, and they do this by specializing in government largess. In other words, they take from the haves and give to the have-nots. Unlike the infamous Robin Hood, they do not take everything, but they take enough of a producer’s earnings to give to enough people to get re-elected. Often they do this under the guise of compassion for fellow human beings.

Federal welfare is a fairly new development that occurred after the Great Depression started. Although it started out rather meager in size, the Democrat Party under Franklin D. Roosevelt saw an opportunity to turn poverty into votes.

Thus, today we have what is often referred to as “entitlement programs.” As for the poverty rate, it has remained constant even though the federal government has spent trillions to eliminate it. We do see a new phenomenon, however. Welfare, or some other government program, supports generations of people.

Economists who have studied Roosevelt’s big government policies admit that they did little or nothing to improve the economy or bring us out of the depression. Only America’s entry into World War II propelled the country out of the depression. After December 7, 1941, anyone who wanted a job could find work.

Nevertheless, the “progressives,” starting with Woodrow Wilson, had planted the seeds of socialism, and FDR watered and fertilized these seeds as much as possible until the war distracted him. Things rocked along through the Truman and Eisenhower administrations, but then, Lyndon Baines Johnson came to power after the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Johnson was an old time “progressive” who thought that the government could solve every problem and make every citizen rich.

Many costly entitlement programs were passed during the Johnson years, and this is where the Law of Unintended Consequences comes into play.

I do not believe that Johnson wanted the United States to go broke, but his blind devotion to liberalism compelled him to believe that what he was doing was for the good of the country. He had no idea that his beloved entitlement programs would one day send this country into

bankruptcy.
We can no longer afford the entitlement programs mandated by the federal government. The federal government owes $61.6 trillion in unfunded mandates. This translates to a tax burden of $525,000 per household. We can no longer afford much of anything. Today, the headlines read, “USA in worse shape than Greece.”
Governments, as Locke predicted, ignore the Law of Unintended Consequences, and they do so at their own peril. Even with the handwriting on the wall, the tax and spend Democrat Party has no sense of urgency to correct the downward economic spiral the country is presently experiencing. Barack Obama appears to have no plan for extricating us from the financial crisis that is literally destroying thousands of families throughout this country.
Expect the economy to grow worse. Expect the unemployment rate to grow worse. Expect inflation to get worse, much worse. Expect the Obama administration to continue its war on capitalism. Thanks to FDR and LBJ, Obama has the necessary tools to win this war, courtesy of the Law of Unintended Consequences.