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QuickPoint! – Limiting Government: A Goal That’s Always Worthwhile

By Lydia White

As inauguration weekend unfolded, Republicans cheered with a gasp of relief, Democrats protested, and many broke down into tears and even violence.

The extremity of responses from people across the political spectrum reveals a troubling aspect of contemporary politics: Many are terrified the “wrong” party will come into the federal government’s vast powers.

If Americans feel their livelihood depends on one election cycle, the scope of government is far too big.

Since the 1990s, each party held control of the White House and both chambers of Congress for four years. Under their leadership, Republicans ballooned public debt by 32%, Democrats by 45%.

Every new administration, whether Republican or Democratic, brings more spending and less freedom. Yet, for some reason, Americans find this acceptable as long as the spending is on their party’s preferred programs, compensating for the other party’s inane spending. This never-ending cycle sets precedent for every subsequent administration to retaliate and further mushroom public debt.

Instead of continuing this trend of ever-growing government, self-declared limited-government advocates should live by their principles and scale back bureaucracy across the board.

Should they be tempted to engorge themselves by forcing “favorable” big government policies through Congress, conservatives must be ready to face the consequences. The powers amassed may very well land into the “wrong” hands yet again.

Lydia White is a Research Associate at Cascade Policy Institute, Oregon’s free market public policy research organization.

