

**To the Editor:**

We are faced with another bunch of poor choices for 2012. When I am writing this, the only Republican choices are Mitt Romney, Ron Paul, Newt Gingrich and Rick Santorum. That is about the ranking that I see them, too.

I only wish the media would delve into the actual positions, contributions and history of each candidate instead of the horse race analogy, the terms conservative, moderate, values conservative, liberal or libertarian. All I have to say about these terms is who cares?

Beware the candidate who says he will balance the budget, lower taxes and increase military spending. That is poppycock and not a little dishonest. This is dishonest because the increase in military spending only increases the candidate's contributions from the military-industrial complex. When you consider an increase in military spending you need to listen to the military, not lobbyists for the corporations. National defense is not a jobs program.

What I want to know is what a candidate wants to do about the deficit and the national debt which accelerated under Reagan, the two Bushes and President Barack Obama. I know it's boring, but frankly I do not want to live in a tent. Also, I do not want to hear any more garbage about reducing the payroll tax. Congress has for years spent the excess in payroll taxes and issues IOU's and bonds to put in the Social Security Trust Fund. Now we are spending at both ends of the spectrum.

Do not promise to reduce taxes on investments or continue the current 15 percent rate and increase military spending. We have been down that dead end road before. The argument that this increases employment is correct, but where? According to *Money* magazine, of which I question the absolute numbers but not the conclusion, all new money invested in the stock market since 2007 has been invested overseas. Where did you say those jobs were?

All the comments about too much regulation are also hogwash. Lack of regulation and failure to enforce the regulations already on the books was one of the major causes of the real estate financial services meltdown in addition to the failed action by mortgage companies allowing borrowers into homes they could not afford with the complicity of Congress and courts.

We need to hold our “leaders” feet to the fire. Apathy is a copout and will result in failure.

**Frank C. Newbell**  
**Lebanon**