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## Morality and Taxes

2010 April 8



by [Michael van der Galien](#)

tags: [CATO](#), [Conservatives](#), [IRS](#), [Libertarians](#), [News](#), [NewsRealblog](#), [Politics](#), [Taxes](#)



At the CATO Institute's website, [Richard W. Rahn makes the excellent point](#) that, while it is absolutely necessary to pay taxes in a civilized society, tax laws not only have to be functional but also moral. And, I'm sad

to say, some of today's laws are anything but:

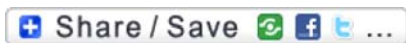
The county tax collector who is responsible for the collection of property taxes is engaged in a necessary activity because it is through his or her efforts that the local police, fire departments and schools are funded. In most places, all pay the same tax rate, with those having more expensive properties paying proportionally more and vice versa. The tax, and how it is applied, is readily understood by most people. Even though many may complain about the tax rate, the tax itself is generally considered fair...

Unlike the local property and sales taxes, the federal income tax and the IRS have perverted the law, which is supposed to ensure equal justice, into an instrument of plunder through legislation (as contrasted with constitutional law) and regulation. The Constitution gives the federal government the right to tax for the "common Defense" and "general [not specific] welfare" (e.g., the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). Many of the current departments of government (e.g., the Departments of Housing, Energy, Education and Health and Human Services) seem to have no constitutional basis, and nowhere does the Constitution give the federal government the power to engage in income redistribution.

Leftists often like to pretend that conservatives and libertarians oppose *all* taxes. Although that makes for a handy talking point for them, it couldn't be further from the truth. There are some taxes we have to pay. If we refuse, society will collapse. It's that simple.

However, our quarrel is with the many other taxes levied by the government. Unlike the necessary ones listed by Rahn, these taxes serve to redistribute wealth and to remake society, not to provide us with the necessary infrastructure we need to take care of ourselves and our families. Taxes should serve to pay for creating the circumstances in which we can all blossom - if we choose to. They are not meant, or they should not be meant, to accomplish more.

At the very moment opportunistic and careless politicians ignore the above, the law ceases to be moral. And that, although most contemporary politicians seem unable to comprehend it, is a problem. As Frederic Bastiat correctly said, "No society can exist unless the laws are respected to a certain degree, but the safest way to make them respected is to make them respectable. When law and morality are in contradiction to each other, the citizen finds himself in the cruel alternative of either losing his moral sense, or of losing his respect for the law."



from → [Economy, Feature](#)

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[The Inquisitor](#) 51p · 22 hours ago

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"Leftists often like to pretend that conservatives and libertarians oppose all taxes."

Taxation is theft. There is no getting around the truth of that statement. It is my policy not to discuss the issue with anyone who does not acknowledge that fact.

The first step in restoring moral order is to cut all government spending which is not necessary for the only legitimate government function of protecting individual rights.

The second step is to be honest. If you are not clever enough to devise a moral means of financing legitimate government functions then be man enough to admit your intellectual shortcomings; don't pretend that taxation isn't theft.

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Anthony · 19 hours ago

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Yes, taxation is perfectly legitimate, so long as it is practiced within moral boundaries. Property tax is obscene, immoral, and tyrannical. Why? Simply by the fact that such tax has the power to turn you into a beggar living in the streets. Tax business property taxes, but not the house I own. Own? No, I don't own it, because as long as I have to pay property tax in my dwelling place, I am not the owner, I am simply a tenant of the State; now, that's theft in the grossest expression of it. Every year I have to pay several thousand dollars to the County, and if I refuse, in several years they will send the Swat Team (so to speak) to my residence and evict me or else. Now, that's not liberty, that's tyranny. I deeply resent such tax; it is immoral, against the law of nature and of God, it tramples my rights to my own home; breaks the 10th Commandment, "Thou shalt not

covet your neighbour's property." It applies to the individual, but specially to the State. Something is going to have to give, or else.

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xkn · 17 hours ago

+1

Perpetual property tax is the direct negation of the right of private property. When one's right to use something depends on perpetual payment for the right to use it, that is relationship which economists call, in most general form - rent. So the title on property is essentially a fraudulent document in the US, as it is even lacking the fingerprint specifying that the title is conditional upon perpetual payment of fess to maintain what is essentially a mirage of its validity. It is funny how property taxes only pay for police, firefighters and (of course public) schools. Not a penny is spent on anything else?! Really? Where is sales tax going? Why are schools also getting state and federal support if local property taxes are all they live on? Or is it perhaps that the property tax is there because it is most stable source of tax income? Can't hide the real estate, and even if unemployed and thus paying no income taxes, property tax is still due?! Uuuugh wait I am sheeple I am not supposed to ask these questions....

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Charlotte · 1 hour ago

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Property tax is the most immoral and unconstitutional of all taxes. It becomes even more tyrannical when coupled with an HOA. Perpetual taxation of one's own home negates the unalienable right to own property. The HOA denies the "owner" his right to manage his own property. Property taxation imposes a group tax rate whereby a group pays the identical tax that a single property owner pays. Two people, two incomes, same services to each person as to the single person next door -- yet, the burden of taxation falls unequally upon these two households. The idea of equality under the law is absurd if it does not apply to tax law. Each individual citizen must pay his burden of taxation. The single person is enslaved; he shoulders twice the tax burden of the couple next door. If they have children and he/she does not, he pays twice what the two income family pays to indoctrinate their children into collectivism. The HOA replicates this tyranny and ups the crime by making all households pay a second time for services for which they have already been taxed. To make matters worse, both property taxes and HOA taxes are regressive. If you believe that progressive taxation is unfair, how is it possible to justify regressive taxation. Now that one's home is being used to redistribute one's wealth, as Agenda 21 is being imposed at local levels across the country, the 'compassion' of government becomes clear to the low income, single, property owner who has been incorporated into an HOA. This person is subsidizing a multitude of persons whose income far exceeds his own. This is social justice.

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Tom · 54 minutes ago

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"Many of the current departments of government (e.g., the Departments of Housing, Energy, Education and Health and Human Services) seem to have no constitutional basis..."

They (and the Department of Transportation) have little constitutional basis on the Federal level. Most of these functions should be spun off to the states. Those functions that are truly Federal should be put back into Commerce. However, our history does show that science education is vital for national security and commerce. A federal Department of Education, Science, and Technology should be seriously considered.

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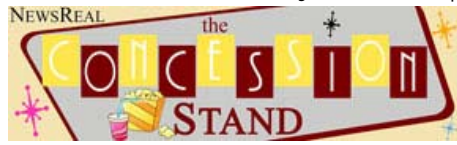
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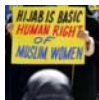
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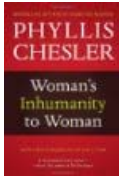


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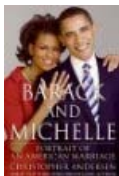

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