

HST 203: History of the United States Sp14 (Escobar Meta 41237 41238)

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Forum 2

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Taxation by the Federal Government



by Joe Escobar - Saturday, April 19, 2014, 5:54 PM

This forum thread is for Taxation by the Federal Government posts and replies.

After studying the required materials, address the questions in your posts.

To make your POSTS, click the reply link in this, MY post.

To reply to another student's post, be sure to click the reply link within in THEIR post.

IMPORTANT - SUBJECT LINES

BE SURE to use an informative subject line for your post. Do NOT simply leave it

RE: Taxation by the Federal Government

Sum of ratings: -

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Working for the Government



by Justin Guinan - Monday, April 21, 2014, 10:58 PM

The taxation of the american is crazy. The amount that the government spending goes up and up and they already tax pretty much everything that you use buy or do in some way shape or form. But yet they start touching our wages so that when we work as Coolidge states we are working for the gvernment. Coolidge is correct ower public costs so my paycheck that i work for, that hard earned cash goes in my pocket not to pay government expense

Sum of ratings: (1)

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Only difference between death and taxes is that death doesn't get worse every



time Congress meets...

by Dalyn Stram - Monday, April 21, 2014, 11:54 PM

I strongly agree with Coolidge on taxes here. And more than simply liking what I heard, I am encouraged by the fact that he actually followed through with what he said he would do. Imagine that! A politician telling the truth and doing what he promised! While in office, Coolidge cut taxes and reduced federal expenditures. In 1924 Congress passed the Revenue Act of 1924, which reduced income tax rates and eliminated all income taxes for around two million people. They passed similar acts in 1926 and 1928 and by 1927 only the top 2% paid income taxes. Maybe even more impressive is that Coolidge was able to keep federal costs down the whole time. I think the American government today could not only use politicians who do what they say, but also should be decreased in overall size and cost. Our government has done nothing but gotten bigger and bigger over the years, and has become almost unrecognizable from the smaller, locally focused government our founders envisioned. Two quotes of Coolidge's I really like. First, "I want the people of America to be able to work less for the government -- and more for themselves." Second, "I want them to have the rewards of their own industry. This is the chief meaning of freedom." A lot can said on the subject of taxes, and I know I myself could go for far too long it. But those two quotes, in a nutshell, do an excellent job of summarizing what I believe, and what many people in America believe, on the subject of taxes today.

When it comes to taking sides, I would say that both those on the left and the right typically dislike higher taxes. At least on the ground, among the people you meet every day on the street, that the general consensus. Nobody likes taxes and everybody could use some extra cash. What I think the differences come down to are which programs to support and how much should go to those programs. In general, liberals and those on the left support more welfare programs and such while demanding cuts to the military spending. On the other side, conservatives typically support more military and national security spending while not supporting welfare programs as much. I see conservatives as desiring much less federal intrusion, control, and overall taxation (with more local control) and just in general leaving individuals to their own means, while liberals see government as possessing the possibility of righting wrongs and taking care of us and always backing up the individual. The term "nanny state" is often used by conservatives to describe this view. For myself, I fall much more on the right side of things, especially in regards to taxes. I hate paying taxes, but I think they do some great things (fire departments, etc) and so I really have no problem paying my share. However, I think taxes in general have gotten out of control. We waste billions of dollars each year on ridiculous things (\$1 million on a fruit fly attractiveness study, \$1.5 million on designing a video game controller, etc). Outside of silly things like that, I really do believe certain programs which do in fact provide needed services, like welfare, have also gotten out of control. Welfare, which was designed to help pull people out of poverty, all too often instills a feeling of entitlement and laziness. I've known people like this in my own life. Welfare is also abused to an absurd extent by people who truly don't need it. But on the other hand, I would also support military cuts of small proportions. In general, I would support cuts to probably most things in government. I

think America would be just fine doing with less of everything in regards to federal government and letting private enterprise and individual communities provide services.

Also, I would be interested in the government pursuing a flat tax rate. I'm not sure if it would solve the tax problems, but it intrigues me. It would eliminate singling out the "rich people" (who already pay most of the taxes), and it would make us all equal under the tax code. The current tax code is confusing, and a flat tax rate would solve that while putting all Americans under the same roof; we would all pay the same percent into our system and hopefully create some sense of equality.

Last thought: we have to stop raising taxes to pay down the deficit. It's simple math; we cannot raise enough taxes to significantly cut into the deficit. It really all comes down to program cuts in my opinion.

Check out some stuff from Friedman if you so desire. I don't always agree with him, but I think he had some brilliant thoughts on govt, and especially taxes/economics in regards to this forum.

<http://www.forbes.com/2009/03/09/flat-tax-plan-obama-opinions-columnists-taxes.html>

<http://thedailyhatch.org/2012/07/27/milton-friedman-if-taxes-are-raised-in-order-to-keep-down-the-deficit-the-result-is-likely-to-be-a-higher-norm-for-government-spending-charlie-rose-interview-pt-4/>

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Only difference between death and taxes is that death doesn't get worse every time Congress meets...

by Andrew Betz - Wednesday, April 23, 2014, 12:11 PM

I enjoyed reading your post I found it very insightful. It was obvious that you did a fair amount of research based on the statistics you gave and the way that you used the information you gathered to back your points. along with sound research you used your personal opinions to make strong arguments. For instance with welfare and how you personally know people who have abused the program. All in all I Like how you incorporated the line that Coolidge said "I want them to have the rewards of their own industry. This is the chief meaning of freedom." I felt that that was a main aspect of his speech; and added to the overall effectiveness of your post. Oh and not to mention you had a great subject line, it was very creative and I'd have to say true!

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Only difference between death and taxes is that death doesn't get worse every time Congress meets...

by Morgan Reid - Friday, April 25, 2014, 4:25 PM

I agree with you on the statement about nobody liking taxes. After all, who wouldn't like a little extra money in their pocket? However, I understand the reasoning behind taxes and am frankly not too bothered paying them, as long as its on the neccesary programs(law enforcement, natural resources, education, veteran benefits). As Escobar mentioned in class on Thursday, the reality is that our country is a lot better/freer than other countries, so of course there is going to be a price to pay for that freedom. Also, I agree with you when it comes to welfare in terms of how often it is abused today in this country. It's actually pretty absurd the sense of entitlement it gives to some individuals.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Taxation and America's middle class

by Blake Taylor - Saturday, April 26, 2014, 8:42 PM

A report came out this week that says that America's has fallen behind Canada's as the world's richest (http://www.nytimes.com/2014/04/23/upshot/the-american-middle-class-is-no-longer-the-worlds-richest.html?_r=0). This comes as no surprise, as study after study has come out, demonstrating that our middle class has been steadily shrinking (<http://billmoyers.com/2013/09/20/by-the-numbers-the-incredibly-shrinking-american-middle-class/>; http://www.forbes.com/fdc/welcome_mjx.shtml). It's often noted with some nostalgia that America's middle class was most successful during the post-WWII period, and many politicians on both sides of the aisle publicly yearn for a return to that era of the American Dream. What's rarely acknowledged, however, was that was a time when the tax rate was somewhere between 70%-90% (http://www.businessweek.com/finance/occupy-wall-street/archives/2011/12/the_great_compression_how_war_and_taxes_made_us_and_why_thats_changed.html) and many families received their homes and educations from the federally-funded, tax-payer supported G.I. Bill. Taxes support programs that grow our economy. I won't disagree with anyone who says that some tax dollars are wasted, but for our social and economic health, taxes are a necessity.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Taxation and America's middle class

by Dalyn Stram - Saturday, April 26, 2014, 9:02 PM

I read the article, and it's interesting to note that the author admits in the opening paragraph that the government didn't raise taxes to as high as

83% to simply raise money for the government, it was to restrict how much money people could earn. Sadly, that's not true capitalism. That's not freedom. As long as people aren't stealing or treating their workers inhumanely, I believe people have a right to make as much money as they can (legally). Plus, the more taxes the government brings in, the more tempted they are to concoct bogus programs and services, give government workers raises and bonuses, and in general waste more of our money. At this point, who in their right mind would think giving the government more money is a smart idea? I think the author's main point here is really trying to reduce income inequality; but if you think income inequality is a non-factor (as I do), and that the media and politicians hammer the issue in an attempt to raise hysteria and hatred/envy for the upper classes, then you're not going to buy into much of what the author is saying.

"If you put the government in charge of the Sahara desert, in 5 years there would be a shortage of sand" - Milton Friedman

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

2

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Way to go Coolidge

by Connor McCabe - Monday, April 21, 2014, 11:55 PM

When you watch the video it at first sounds almost like he is backing the taxation of Americans almost out of existence. Then you hear Mr. Coolidge talk about how you are working for the government, and once its needs are met then you can have your food, housing, etc. His bringing up points against the governments taxation of the people are refreshing to hear. Whether it is just a nice thought or something we may be able to implement, I know keeping more of my hard earned money will always sound good. The government does not know how to better spend your money. For example "The National Science Foundation used a half-million dollar grant to create a Facebook game that simulates social interactions associated with prom week." -<http://benswann.com/8-ridiculous-ways-that-the-government-wasted-your-money/2/#ixzz2zazikj2J>

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

2

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Re: Way to go Coolidge

by Robert Johnson - Saturday, April 26, 2014, 1:07 PM

I can, and do agree with everything on your post here, and especially two of your points.

First, the more of my money I get to keep instead of paying taxes with it the better. Then second, I feel like the government does spend our taxes inappropriately all the time, and your example of that on your post is a great one

to make that point. I would add to it, all the wasted money our government blow's in the name democracy, like the billions spent on wars we shouldn't be in.

I can see from the 1st chart that of all the taxes paid to the government, the amount of it coming from income taxes has definitely increased over the years, look's like about 50% at the end of the chart. Although I realize there are, and will continue to be increasingly more people to pay income taxes now and in the future, as an American citizen, and knowing/expecting our country will always have bills to pay, I'm not thrilled about it, but im ok with paying my taxes. But I do wish we american citizens had more control over what our taxes do, or do not get spent on.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Tax Man!

by Jennifer Rose - Tuesday, April 22, 2014, 12:43 PM

Admittedly, I'm not a very patriotic person. I'm relatively new to the United States and a lot of US history baffles me, to be honest. However, I definitely would feel more pride when I pay my taxes if so much of the money I fork over didn't fund military and US imperialism. That being said, I do feel that, with the government and our society set up the way it is today, taxes are necessary. I won't say I enjoy handing over money that I have little clue of where it goes, and US taxpayers deserve more transparency in how our taxes are being spent. However, as a driven, yet still working-class person I enjoy and feel I deserve the benefits that result in the collective taxes of the United States. Freedom comes from being able to live life the way you want to lead it, and I personally would not be able to lead the life I love without the aid of government, whether it's funding for the education I receive, food stamps when I needed them (yeah, it's pretty hard to be free when you're hungry!) or simply access to emergency services that I and so many others would be dead without (and I wouldn't be able to enjoy freedom at all!)

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Tax Man!

by Dalyn Stram - Saturday, April 26, 2014, 2:08 PM

If freedom comes partly from getting financial aid from the government, then I'm not very free. I've never gotten a cent from the government for school. It seems if you're middle class in this country, you have to go up to your neck in debt to get through college. It frustrates me when I have friends who don't work and use their financial aid for things like rent, car payments, a new Xbox...and I'm thousands of dollars in debt, even while working and going to school. I'd love to see reform in financial aid. I don't want to see my tax money paying for another students school when I can't even afford to go to school myself.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Tax Man!

by Jennifer Rose - Saturday, April 26, 2014, 3:55 PM

You've never gotten a cent for school? Were you homeschooled for high school or did you go to a private school that didn't accept ANY assistance from the government whatsoever? I personally wasn't talking about financial aid (although I agree it could use some changes) but government funding education in general. I suppose I was unclear on that point though!

Also, I couldn't describe myself as middle-class yet but I can say that I have already accrued thousands of dollars worth of loans for college alone, on top of paying for life-saving medical bills. I'm with you though on this - it is quite demoralizing and disheartening to pay for taxes on top of student loans, on top of the cost of living while barely making ends meet!

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Tax Man!

by Dalyn Stram - Saturday, April 26, 2014, 8:50 PM

Nope, I went to a public high school here in Lane County. I've gotten federal loans, but that's money I have to pay back with interest. There's not even a point in me filling out a FAFSA because I never get money anyways. I went to a private university in Sacramento for a year, and I got some grants there, but I've never gotten anything from the government.

Sum of ratings: (1)

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Wise man Coolidge

by Andrew Betz - Wednesday, April 23, 2014, 12:45 AM

Overall I find myself agreeing with the position Coolidge takes on taxation. I agree with Coolidge because in the video he says " Taxes must be paid. They are not a voluntary contribution of surplus earnings, they are a stern necessity, they come first." This statement states how important taxes are to the functioning of government. Without taxes running the government would be very difficult. This is true because there is such a large amount of money brought in by taxes annually, compensating government employees, and funding federal programs would be next to impossible. I also found it compelling when Coolidge said in the video he wants the people to have the reward of their own industry, and that this is the chief meaning of freedom. I performed some separate research and found an interesting statement

made by the NCPA (National Center for Policy Analysis). This is what I found on there website that I thought was interesting “Our research shows that high tax rates discourage work, saving and investment. Lowering marginal tax rates in general, and taxes on capital specifically, has the power to boost economic activity”(NCPA). To think that the marginal tax rates in America affect the economy was surprising to me. The article goes on to talk about limited government... as soon as I read this a flag went up telling me this was a conservative point of view. My Point being that Coolidge holding conservative beliefs would agree with these points. Another conservative George Bush clearly coincides with what the NCAP states as proof I bring to your attention the tax cuts during his administration discussed in the Forum 2 materials.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Wise man Coolidge

by Andrew Betz - Wednesday, April 23, 2014, 11:30 AM

Here are the links to the articles I used in my post.

<http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2013/02/calvin-coolidge-forefather-of-our-conservatism>

<http://www.ncpa.org/taxes/>

Sum of ratings: (1)

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Working For the Government

by Andrew Betz - Friday, April 25, 2014, 4:08 PM

Today I received my pay check from my job, which isn't very much to begin with. As I was looking over my Gross income (before taxes) on the pay stub I was happy. Then when I looked at my Net income (after taxes). The amount the federal and state government had taken from my check made me think of the speech Coolidge' gave. Specifically when he talked about working for ourselves and not for the government. When you get over \$150 taken out of not a very large check it makes you feel almost that you working for the government. Would you say that I am incorrect?

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Working For the Government

by Morgan Reid - Friday, April 25, 2014, 4:31 PM

Couldn't have said it better myself. if i was working for myself,I wouldn't be handing out \$150 from a \$400/\$500 check. I'm all for taxes, but if we're being honest, I would see it a bit more reasonable if it was maybe \$75, maybe \$90?

But hey, that's just in a more ideal world I suppose.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1

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Re: Working For the Government

by Laura Newman - Saturday, April 26, 2014, 7:55 PM

Oregon specifically is one of the highest states when it comes to income tax. It makes me wonder if they started charging sales tax for purchases like many other states, whether that would make the tax decrease. I doubt many people would be too thrilled about that type of taxation. Unfortunately, taxes are a necessity.

Perhaps if the United States followed the model of countries such as Denmark, Sweden or Belgium, allowing higher taxes and in return receive a higher standard of living, incredible health care, and in some cases free education. The United States is in the top 20 of countries with the best/highest standard of living, but there is room for improvement.

I think a lot of people are afraid of change like this, especially because it borders on socialist ideals, and we've all learned how those ideas get treated in America. I stumbled upon this Forbes article, it's pretty interesting.

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/realspin/2012/10/25/european-socialism-why-america-doesnt-want-it/>

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

2

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Coolidge was on the right path

by Connor McCabe - Saturday, April 26, 2014, 8:37 AM

As a nation we have moved away of our roots of being big government weary to big government dependent. We give our money to the government thinking that "they're the government, they know what they need to do and what to spend money on." We are duped into allowing ourselves to work a large portion of our time for the government when the people should be able to "...work less for the government and more for themselves."- Calvin Coolidge. We depend on government to make the decisions and to spoon feed us in most every facet of our lives. The people need to be the focus and hold the power not the government. This nation is built on a "Government of the people, by the people, for the people..."- Abraham Lincoln. Our nation has strayed far from this original mindset where you knew what was best for you. If we refocus our path and bring it back to what our fore fathers intended the we will be able to enjoy what Calvin Coolidge talks about, the people will be able "... to have the rewards of their own industry."

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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working for the government

by Emily Kiernan - Saturday, April 26, 2014, 8:05 PM

After listening to Coolidge's speech I found myself agreeing with a majority of his points about taxation. I found it interesting that while he acknowledges that taxation is a "a stern necessity" and necessary in running a healthy and productive government yet, he also points out that these same taxes force the American people to "to work for a certain part of his time for the government. I personally am not always happy to blindly give part of my paycheck to the government however, I understand that tax money goes towards funding many programs and services that do a great deal of good for country that without tax payers dollars would not have the means to exist.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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