

HST 203: History of the United States Sp17 (Escobar Meta 41054 41053)

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Taxation

by Joe Escobar - Friday, April 21, 2017, 11:28 PM

This thread is for discussions on the Taxation topic.

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, something that describes which question(s) you are addressing . Do NOT simply leave it RE: Taxation

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Re: Taxation - progressive tax example

by Giselle Flores - Sunday, April 23, 2017, 8:57 PM

The example of the three brothers definitely helped me understand the progressive tax code in use. I never understood it before, but that was a simple, straight forward explanation. It also does influence my understanding of taxation. After watching that video, I felt bad for Harry. Why should he have to sacrifice more if they all chose how much they wanted to work? He worked hard for his money. They shouldn't necessarily pay an equal amount since Tom does earn very little compared to his brothers, but Harry also shouldn't have paid for the majority of the cost when it was something they all decided they wanted to do.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1

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Re: Taxation - progressive tax example

by Weichang Gu - Friday, April 28, 2017, 11:18 PM

I enjoy the story, but this video is too exaggerating. The real point of a progressive tax isn't to make upper middle class persons pay more than lower middle class persons, but rather to prevent the pooling of wealth into a small community of persons who then have the means to usurp the political process. The progressive tax should be designed in such a way that really takes effect when people start making multiples of tens of millions of dollars a year and the reason it should do this, more than anything else, is to protect our constitutional representative government. What we want are tax policies that promote the middle class and reduce both extreme wealth and extreme poverty.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1

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The increasing rates of federal income tax

by Justin Onusko - Monday, April 24, 2017, 12:38 PM

The provided charts show a clear upwards trend since the 1980s in the amount of federal tax revenue that the government is taking in from its citizens. The first graph titled "U.S. Tax Revenues from 1980 to 2009" shows an increasing gap between the income tax and total tax revenue over the past 40 years. This means that additional taxes are being added or raised to bring in additional money.

Something that stood out to me was the distribution of income tax revenue. In 2010 the top 1% was paying 24.2% of the total income tax revenue and the 81st-99th percentile was paying 44.6% of the revenue. That is 68.8% of the federal income tax coming from just two groups of citizens. That leaves the remaining 31.2% to be split up by the rest of the tax brackets. (Chart titled "Shares of US Federal Tax Liabilities for all Households, by Pre-tax Income Group, 2010)

While reading President Coolidge's speech on taxation I found myself agreeing with many of his points. A quote that stuck out to me was "I want the people of America to work less for the government and more from themselves". The textbook describes him as a silent man who prefers to have as little government as possible. (page 788) It appears that Coolidge kept his promises, the Revenue Act of 1926 reduced income tax and estate taxes that the progressives had fought for during world war one. (textbook page 789). These reductions can be seen on the "History of income tax rates adjusted for inflation" graph quite clearly. At the start of Coolidge's presidency tax rates for the highest bracket were 43.5% and by the end of his presidency they had dropped to 24%.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

3

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Re: Taxation

by Tyler Ingram - Monday, April 24, 2017, 3:47 PM

The example of the three brothers was an interesting simplification of how taxes work. I agree with much of the video's message in terms of how taxes are paid, but I believe it is important to look at the differences between an real life, and an example of three brothers with equal opportunities who all have the opportunity to afford the cost of living.

In real life, we obviously have more complicated problems: People raised in environments that encourage a life of low income, people with disabilities who are unable to earn income at all, people who do not have the opportunities or natural abilities to make much more money than they need to survive, etc.

In a more perfect world, where everybody is able to earn enough to survive and live comfortably, I completely agree with the message of this video. But when higher costs interfere with a large amount of the population's ability to live, we are effectively violating people's right to the pursuit of happiness.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1

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Re: Taxation

by Weichang Gu - Friday, April 28, 2017, 10:55 PM

The example of the three brothers raises another interesting question: Fair relative to what? Communism advocate that average distribution of wealth.(if that is real fair which The Soviet Union will not disintegrate) The richest 1% pay an effective federal income tax rate of 24.7%.(<https://americansfortaxfairness.org/tax-fairness-briefing-booklet/fact-sheet-taxing-wealthy-americans/>) Why do they got punish when they work hard? I have a conclusion: The twenty-first century is a pluralistic society, we shouldn't pay attention on one system (Capitalism, communism, or socialism). Capitalism can learn social welfare from communism; and socialism can learn capital operation from capitalism. All in all, A stable society is good for business, so billionaire would to pay high tax.

Sum of ratings:1 (1) 1

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Re: Debate Tax system

by Weichang Gu - Monday, April 24, 2017, 6:44 PM

What conclusions can you draw by examining the history of taxation in the United States provided in these charts and graphs?

I think American tax system are degenerate. according "The chart shows the history of the Top U.S. Federal marginal income tax rate from 1913 to 2010. (the rate paid by the wealthiest Americans)" The Top 1% group's Tax rate are decrease. Rate system serves to dampen income inequality. "The Revenue Act of 1926 slashed the high income and estate taxes that progressives had pushed through Congress during the First World War. "(textbook P.789) The inequality has risen, the federal system has become less progressive and therefore less able to reduce that inequality.

Overall, do you find yourself agreeing or disagreeing with President Coolidge's position on taxation? Are there specific points he makes that you find either most compelling or lacking merit?

I agree with President Coolidge's position on taxation. according President Coolidge's speech "This means that the farmer is doomed to provide a certain amount of money out of the sale of

his produce, no matter how low the price, to pay his taxes."(video 0:27) The government has to get money from somewhere. Most compelling is President Coolidge give people a free market. He said "I want the people of America to be able to work less for the government — and more for themselves."(video 1:73) which mean President Coolidge think a good economic that make decision by citizen, not government. "He believed that the best government was the government that governed least, and that the welfare of the country hinged not on politicians but on the people—their willingness to work hard, to be honest, and to live within their means." (textbook P.788)

Sum of ratings:3 (1) 3

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Re: Debate tax system

by Weichang Gu - Monday, April 24, 2017, 6:45 PM

Does the Example of the Three Brothers, which provides an explanation of the progressive tax code currently in use, help, hurt, or otherwise influence your understanding of taxation in the United States?

Yes, it help me understanding of taxation in the United States, but I have to say that Justice is not equal to fairness.

Pick out some statements from a newspaper or reputable internet news source that represent either support for or against governmental taxation.

I choose article: Economics of Taxation.(<https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/faqs/Taxes/Pages/economics.aspx>)

Who or what groups are on which side of this debate?

I think this debate for government to persuade people to pay tax.

What rhetoric do they use as they attempt to make their case?

."Federal Government services and activities, including protection of natural resources, environmental protection, and maintenance of recreation areas and public lands."

(<https://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/faqs/Taxes/Pages/economics.aspx>)

The article give people a lot of great wish.

Are they using Coolidge and his examples for support or are they offering a rebuttal to his position?

Yes, they didn't use Coolidge's examples, but they use his ideal. they believe "Our American economy is based on the free enterprise system." (Economics of Taxation P.3) Open competition among producers usually results in their providing the best quality of goods or services at the lowest possible prices.

Sum of ratings:2 (1) 2

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Three brothers

by Morgan Steinmetz - Monday, April 24, 2017, 6:43 PM

After watching the Three Brothers youtube video on the current tax system in America, I can say I am honestly a little conflicted when it comes to how I feel about the current system.

Before I watched the video, I agreed with the system because I thought it was fair. If you make more, you should be taxed more, plain and simple. Without taking the video into consideration,

I still think our tax system is fair, but when you look at how it's broken down from a perspective like the video gives, it doesn't seem fair at all. In the video one of the brothers has the idea to just split it evenly. That idea, I know would never work nor would it ever be fair.

When I think about it a little more, I still think I agree with the current system because in my opinion you can't really compare taxes to splitting the cost of fixing up your neighborhood. I know that wasn't the point of the video but like I said, I still think I agree with our current tax system.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Three brothers

by Weichang Gu - Friday, April 28, 2017, 10:04 PM

I am strongly agree with your ideal. Fairness doesn't mean justice. There have a example, One child is born into a wealthy family, while another is born into a poor family. The child of the wealthy family gets all the benefits of a good school, good parenting, good dental care, etc. The child of the poor family drops out of school to work, has somewhat neglectful parents, doesn't have access to the same level of health care. Is this situation fair or justice? (<https://objectivismforintellectuals.wordpress.com/2012/07/18/206/>)

I have to say that is justice, because wealthy family payed money (The money from parents' hard work); however it isn't fairness, because every people should have chance take education.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Thoughts on the history of taxation

by Garrett Warner - Monday, April 24, 2017, 7:41 PM

The charts are fascinating to me. Obviously the trend of upward movement, or more spending I think is due to the overuse of imports. We buy too much and sell too little. For the second chart I find it confusing that the lowest bracket is in the negatives for the individual income tax of 2000. I also find it interesting that the lowest income earners pay the most taxes. There are more people in that bracket of taxes compared to those in the top one percent. In Coolidge's speech I agree with him on the fact that, "Taxes take from everyone a part of his earnings and force everyone to work for a certain part of his time for the government." (video 2:30) I do also think that we have lost these ways in a sense. This is because greedy people in power have the ability to pay off people to get their way. It is unfortunate and hopefully, everyone starts paying their fair share.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: Thoughts on the history of taxation

by Tyler Ingram - Wednesday, April 26, 2017, 10:49 PM

I'm pretty interested by the upward trend of the charts myself, and I agreed much more with the current tax system before hearing our lectures and watching this video. Of course I agree with your quote and its meaning, but I disagree with the overall spirit of his message somewhat. As someone on the low end of the tax-bracketing system, I wouldn't mind paying a little more to support my country's welfare and operation.

Sure, Coolidge's message sounds great on the surface, *"I want the people of America to be able to work less for the government, and more for themselves."* (Coolidge Video 2:06) But what we cannot escape is that money used by the government is all around us, and we are indirectly using the money we are taxed every day. Without government aid, we wouldn't be able to have our roads, mail, college funds and grants, national parks, national security, domestic security and much much more.

This leads me to agree more with the "flat percentage rate tax" idea from the three brothers video (3:00). The more wealthy one is, the more they are going to utilize many of these government resources, such as roads, mail, and police security. However, it's no secret how much government spending goes to fraud and food-stamps and other programs that the wealthy are forced to pay for, although they have nothing to do with them. Accounting for this, the "greedy people in power", who "have the ability to pay off people to get their way" really have very little to do with anything, especially considering the scams and extra cost of lower class that really seem to be interfering with the fairness of the system.

While I really believe that the key is heavily optimizing how tax money is spent, I'll summarize my thoughts by saying that lower-to-middle class could be pulling a little more weight, Americans shouldn't be so angry to pay taxes that are used to help them, and I don't believe greedy people in power on top are the main reason for high taxes on the rich.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

3



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Re: Thoughts on the history of taxation

by Justin Onusko - Friday, April 28, 2017, 8:47 PM

I think that your post brings up some interesting points, especially when talking about President Coolidge and the need for government in our everyday lives. However, I believe that your third paragraph is worthy of a discussion.

When talking about certain federal resources being used predominantly by the upper-middle class such as roads, mail, and police forces, it struck me the wrong way. Don't we all use roads? Even the lower class people taking buses to work or walking? The postal service is also used by everyone as well. It is an integral part of our country. Of course all of these programs have to be funded which is where taxes come into play. On paper the idea of a flat tax mentioned in the video is great, however in practice it just wouldn't work. For example, someone in the lowest tax bracket making less than \$24,000 a year is most likely going to find more value in \$10 than someone who is making over \$120,00. This can also be seen in the graphs where the lowest brackets are receiving money back from the government. The idea that upper class people have never used food stamps is a little frustrating to me. There are countless stories of people moving here from other countries and slowly working their way up through the economic classes as they find their stride in the american economy.

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Sum of ratings:2 (1)



Re: Thoughts on the history of taxation

by Tyler Ingram - Friday, April 28, 2017, 11:43 PM

Thanks for your reply, my post could have definitely been a lot more clear. What I'm trying to clarify the most here is what I meant by the wealthy are paying more taxes for the larger amount of use of roads/mail/police/etc.

I thinking more of people near the top 1%, or people who own medium to large sized companies. For example, Bill Gates is probably utilizing the United States postal system more than a hundred times as much as you are, has fleets of vehicles containing employees working under him(utilizing the road more than you could ever drive in a lifetime), and has a proportionally huge amount of police force ensuring the protection and safety of his huge amount of properties, both physical and virtual in the form of websites and software.

In response to: "For example, someone in the lowest tax bracket making less than \$24,000 a year is most likely going to find more value in \$10 than someone who is making over \$120,00". Yes, I completely agree in this statement. But flat percentage tax is different than a flat tax. The question you should be asking is whether the \$20,000 earner values \$20 as much as the earner of \$120,000 values \$120. I believe the answer to this question is what defines your views on the subject.

And finally, the claim was no that the wealthy have never used food-stamps: I just meant that when a wealthy person is paying their taxes, you can assume that a strong 99% (of people say, in the \$239,100+ range) did not use food-stamps in that tax year, therefore are paying for aid that they are not able to use.

On a more personal level, I agree that flat taxes wouldn't quite work, but I also believe that people will adjust to small changes, and a 50%+ loss in profits sounds very unfair to me, even for a billionaire.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Re: Thoughts on the history of taxation

by Justin Onusko - Saturday, April 29, 2017, 9:25 PM

For sure. Thanks for the reply. I think we all can agree that no one has figured out a perfect system when it comes to federal income tax.

Sum of ratings:0 (1)

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Re: Thoughts on the history of taxation

by Weichang Gu - Saturday, April 29, 2017, 1:15 AM

I have two different opinions with yours. According these charts; we know taxes have risen so much, but I don't think that caused by overuse of imports. I think United State tax system become more and more complex. Higher income earners could hire accountants or lawyers to help them reduce tax; Low income earners have no ideal to reduce tax. I am a

outlander, so never touch American tax filing system, but I know it's real complex. Coolidge try to mislead the public and abandonment of responsibility, he said: "I want the people of America to be able to work less for the government, and more for themselves." (Video 2:00) People don't need a government who only want to levy taxes, but without give enough social welfare. Taxpayer don't want too many army, but they need enough policemen to keep safety.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1

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Re: Taxation - graphs and Coolidge speech

by Giselle Flores - Tuesday, April 25, 2017, 7:31 PM

The conclusion I can draw by examining these charts and graphs with our history of taxation is that taxes have risen so much. Although, in the 1920's taxes were very low for the wealthy according to the graph that shows the top U.S. Federal marginal income tax rate from 1913 to 2010. I think I would like to say that overall I agree with president Coolidge's position on taxation. A point he made that I found interesting was when he said. "Taxes take from everyone a part of his earnings and force everyone to work for a certain part of his time for the government." I never really noticed how true this was. I really liked the part where he spoke about people working more for themselves and less for the government. I agree on his point where he says that we need to re-establish a condition where earnings of the people are kept by the people. Overall, he had some really solid points and it was a good speech.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1

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Re: is it fair?

by Jason Pickens - Thursday, April 27, 2017, 7:45 PM

Does the Example of the Three Brothers, which provides an explanation of the progressive tax code currently in use, help, hurt, or otherwise influence your understanding of taxation in the United States?

This video definitely gave me some insight why the conservative party always talks about taxes. In all honesty, I never really paid much attention to tax rates-I just paid them and did not think about why I pay the amount I do. When I was making good money I did not ever look at my earning statements much because i was a government employee on a salary who budgeted myself within my means. Now days I tend to be on the side of Harry in the video because I am a homeowner and I get to see the things my property taxes pay for. I also see that my income taxes pay for schools and education. That being said, I just feel like our Oregon public high schools are not very great. I can't believe that I pay for this system that gets kids through it that don't even know how to add fractions at times. Anyways that is the end of my rant. I don't make a lot of money now but I am like Harry. when toward the end of the video the narrator said " he paid his taxes but grumbles a lot.." (4:38 Progressive income Tax: A Tale of Three Brothers) I would definitely say this video influenced my understanding of taxation in the United States. I hope this was not a mini essay.

-Jason

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

2

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**Re: is it fair?**

by Weichang Gu - Saturday, April 29, 2017, 1:55 AM

In fact, I really like american tax system, although I am a international students. I believe american government want to promote the middle class and reduce both extreme wealth and extreme poverty. I lived in the United States for 3 years; US consumption tax is very low (Oregon is 0). On china, Cars and houses are luxury goods. You can not imagine house price in Shanghai, you have to pay protective Tariff, general excise tax, land appreciation tax, and so on. I have to complain Chinese system just for GDP.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1

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**Re: is it fair?**

by Jason Pickens - Saturday, April 29, 2017, 8:33 PM

Although it may appear that here in the United States we have quite a bit of benefits from our tax system, our healthcare system for the longest time has had issues. Before The Affordable Care Act (Obama Care) most Americans who had health care received it from their full time jobs. however, many people who worked part time jobs may not have had access to healthcare. Meanwhile, our government wants to build a wall on its southern border. I think you are right that we have a good system , but those who decide how our taxes get spent could do a better job.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

1

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**Still think only one party likes to collect taxes?**

by Jason Pickens - Friday, April 28, 2017, 8:44 PM

What conclusions can you draw by examining the history of taxation in the United States provided in these charts and graphs?

I can draw only a couple of conclusions from reading the graphs. The first graph that was provided left me with 2 distinct observances. 1) Even though I hear quite a few Americans complain about how the different political parties in the U.S. will play a huge role in the taxes we pay, I seen that starting from the Reagan era and even going through the Clinton years that the tax revenue enjoyed a steady incline. 2) After George W. Bush was elected, in 2000 noticed that tax revenues declined until about 2003. This year is important because that marked the beginning of the war in Iraq, which proved to be very expensive. So I notice that perhaps the war may have had quite a bit to do with the jump in tax revenue. During WW1 I noticed the same thing. (chapter 23 on page 757 of the text, *Liberty Equality, Power: A History of the American People*). it was stated that “ the government incurred large debts buying food, uniforms munitions, weapons, vehicles and sundry other items for the U.S. military. To help pay the bills, the government slapped a 67% income tax and a 25 % inheritance tax.” So, after looking at these graphs and charts, I came to the conclusion that when it is war-time, Uncle Sam will get his money regardless of how you voted.

As for the second chart provided, I can see that there seems to be quite a difference in what the poor pay compared to the rich. I am not sure if it is fair for the rich to be paying so much, but I think if you are the ultra rich elites in this country, you won't feel the sting of a high tax rate upon you; especially if you happen to be a millionaire or even a billionaire. So if the ultra rich had to actually work to get where they are in the tax bracket I can be sympathetic. I would not be so sympathetic towards those who were born into millionaire/billionaire status. In this case I would support a high inheritance tax.

-Jason

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

3

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Conservative Tax Arguments and Bracket-Takeaway

by Tyler Ingram - Saturday, April 29, 2017, 12:22 AM

Pick out some statements from a newspaper or reputable internet news source that represent either support for or against governmental taxation. Who or what groups are on which side of this debate? What rhetoric do they use as they attempt to make their case? Are they using Coolidge and his examples for support or are they offering a rebuttal to his position?

For this response I chose a right-winged Fox news article, which you can find here:
<http://www.foxnews.com/opinion/2011/12/30/class-war-coolidge-response.html>

This article, as you may expect, advertised the idea of lower taxes, with a particular focus of wealthy citizens paying less. What attracted me to this article is that their case is almost entirely composed of the author glorifying Coolidge's ideas. The first long quote that stood out to me was a quote from Coolidge:

"If we had a tax whereby on the first working day the Government took 5 per cent of your wages, on the second day 10 per cent, on the third day 20 per cent, on the fourth day 30 per cent, on the fifth day 50 per cent, and on the sixth day 60 per cent, how many of you would continue to work on the last two days of the week? It is the same with capital. Surplus income will go into tax-exempt securities. It will refuse to take the risk incidental to embarking in business. This will raise the rate which established business will have to pay for new capital, and result in a marked increase in the cost of living. If new capital will not flow into competing enterprise, the present concerns tend toward monopoly, increasing again the prices which the people must pay." (Paragraph 14)

This quote does bring up an interesting point today about tax rates and tax brackets. For an extreme example, let's say it's November, and by the end of the year, you're expected to land at the high end of the 10% tax bracket. You would like some more money, so you consider picking up some extra shifts at your place of work, until you realize that it would put you into the 15% tax bracket for the current tax year. In fact, you might be losing money by taking up these extra shifts now. So instead, you, the federal government, the state government, and your local economy suffer because you had little to no reason to be motivated to work more, and generate more tax revenue.

The article then covers another insightful quote by Coolidge, and some summarizing thoughts including Geb Bush's views on the quote. In the interest of avoiding a mini-term paper, I think I should stop here before length gets out-of-hand. However, I highly recommend reading the

article. It gives slightly more insight into Coolidge as a president, and it's always insightful to see the argument from as many viewpoints in the spectrum as you can, in my experience.

Sum of ratings:3 (1)

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Re: Taxation - article

by Giselle Flores - Saturday, April 29, 2017, 3:45 PM

The article I read is called, "A Tax Expert's Take on Trump's Proposal: 'A Truly Great Tax Plan'". Here is the link to where you can find it:

http://www.americanthinker.com/articles/2017/04/a_tax_experts_take_on_trumps_proposal_a_i

A statement that was said was, "I am a 64 year old CPA who has been doing taxes for approximately 40 years. This is the most intelligent tax policy I have seen since Ronald Reagan's and my initial thoughts make me believe that it is better than Reagan's." As you can see, he is in agreement to this tax policy. His argument on how he thinks it would help everyone, and the economy overall is that, and I quote, "If the U.S makes the corporate tax rates more competitive, businesses in the U.S would have a great incentive to keep businesses here and/or to move business back from overseas." He just wants businesses to keep competitive prices and thrive. If the tax rate is lowered, it gets rid of a lot of special interest deductions including reducing regulations, business and individuals will become more productive.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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Taxation! in America

by Lacey Tolman - Saturday, April 29, 2017, 5:24 PM

The conclusions that can be drawn by examining the history of taxation in the united states is that it is the percent taxed between the lowest bracket and the top bracket are significantly different. Also the amount of money taxed by the federal government inflates significantly during times of warfare, "During World War I, the top rate rose to 77% and the income threshold to be in this top bracket increased to \$1,000,000 (equivalent to \$18.7 million[64] in 2016 dollars)"(wikipedia). I found myself agreeing with coolidge on a lot of points especially when he talked about covering the expenses for government, instead of charging the people more money he wanted the government to find ways to save money instead of just taking more. He said "I want the people of America to be able to work less for the government -- and more for themselves." which i like but then he says taxes "They are a stern necessity. They come first." which I understand, but necessary to what point? because I feel like that is up for interpretation and can lead to issues of over taxation and using taxes as a way to control the public. Because if "the rewards of their own industry.... is the chief meaning of freedom." what's going to happen when you take away all of their "rewards" under the guise of taxes?

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Sum of ratings:2 (1)



Re: Taxation! in America

by Justin Onusko - Saturday, April 29, 2017, 10:03 PM

This can kind of be related back to the three brothers video. When the security gate was purchased and the brothers were deciding how to split up the cost it ended up being that Henry (the person making the most money) had to pay the largest amount because he ended up in the highest "bracket". Understandably Henry was upset, and this is where the last sentence of your response comes into play and and can be related to the video.

Henry worked hard to earn his money and his brothers who worked less than him got to pay less and still enjoy the benefit of having a clean neighborhood and security via the gate.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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