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Taxation by the Federal Government

by Joe Escobar - Saturday, April 18, 2015, 10:58 AM

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

After studying the required materials, address the various questions. For purposes of encouraging discussion, you should group your responses into SEPARATE 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

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"Working less for the government, more for ourselves."

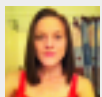
by Delaney Crook - Monday, April 20, 2015, 2:34 PM

After watching the film on President Coolidge and his stand on taxation there was a few lines in his speech that directly caught my attention. The first was that he wanted Americans to be able to "work less for the government and more for themselves. I want them to have the rewards of their own industry. This is the chief meaning of freedom." This idea struck my attention, because I had not thought of taxes in this sense before. I had always seen taxes as part of our duties as Americans to serve our government and this was one way to do so. After watching the film, however, Coolidge's point that by raising the taxed we are being forced to work more for the government, and less for ourselves, and this disrupts our freedom as Americans. We, as a nation, pride ourselves on our liberty and freedom as a whole. While we do have much more liberty and freedom than other countries, Coolidge is correct in that fact that the higher the taxes, the less freedom we have as citizens. We are forced to work more for the government, and are not benefiting from the rewards of our work as much as we could be.

He then went on to say that "until we can reestablish an industry where the earnings of the people can be kept by the people we are bound to suffer a great curtailment of our liberty." He then goes on to use statistics to show who each and every person is affected by these taxes. This quote further provides support of my above statements of the idea that we as Americans are not receiving the rewards and earnings of our work, and until we are able to do so we will continue to not receive our full liberty.

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taxes and freedom go hand in hand

by Katherine Potter - Saturday, April 25, 2015, 11:52 AM

I agree if they raise the taxes we would be basically working for the government because we would loose more of the money we worked hard for. It also would affect how we live are daily lives, if we lost more of the money we make by working a lot of us wouldn't be able to afford to make a living because with how the economy is a lot of Americans struggle to make ends meet.

If they raise the taxes, they would be taking away a freedom because more of are money would go to the government and less would go toward us being able to express ourselves. We rely on the money we make to show who we are as individuals, we do this by how we paint our houses, how we dress, how we decorate and the life style we live. Everyone's life style would be altered by the raise of taxes and at that point the government might as well tell us how to live are lives. In my opinion freedom and taxes go hand in hand.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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Re: taxes and freedom go hand in hand

by [Mariah Turner-Macy](#) - Saturday, April 25, 2015, 3:07 PM

If anyone is employed in the United States and signs a form upon obtaining a new job, they automatically work for the government. Unless it is under the table, taxes will be taken out of every paycheck and go directly for government needs. I agree that raising taxes would not be beneficial for our economy, but since the lower classes don't really need to worry about paying additional money to the government because lack of total income, I worry more about the upper class individuals (for example, doctors) whom have worked hard for their place in our society.

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Re: "Working less for the government, more for ourselves."

by [Benjamin Bross](#) - Saturday, April 25, 2015, 1:39 PM

Personally, I think freedom and taxes are related. Many of the things that make America one of the greatest and freest country on earth. I did a bit of research to figure out where our tax dollars truly are going. For every dollar spent in taxes this is how it is rationed. 42.2 cents go to military, 22.1 goes to healthcare, 10.2 goes to non-military national debt, 8.7 goes to anti-poverty programs, 4.4 goes to education/social services, 3.9 goes to law enforcement and government, 3.3 goes to housing and community development, 2.6 goes to environment and science, 1.5 goes to agriculture and transportation, and 1 goes to international affairs. So while I agree to an extent that taxes are taking away hard earned money from the workers, they exist for a reason and America being one of the best places to live in the world is partially due to taxes. Out of all of the things our tax dollars go to, the only ones I can understand people getting frustrated about are, the amount that goes to military and the non-military national debt. When it comes down to it, taxation is one of the most important reasons that America is a World power. While Coolidge had good intentions, making only the top 2% in income of Americans pay all of the taxes is a bit on the extreme side. I believe that, while not directly responsible for it, the revenue act of 1924, 1926, and 1928 might have partially lead to the great depression, which began in 1929.

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Re: "Working less for the government, more for ourselves."

by [Daniel Schulman](#) - Saturday, April 25, 2015, 11:50 PM

“There is only one kind of freedom and that’s individual liberty. Our lives come from our creator and our liberty comes from our creator. It has nothing to do with government granting it”. I don't like bringing God into political matters so I'm not going to reference that aspect. Taxes and freedom correlate directly, like the quote you chose from Coolidge. "Less for the government, more for ourselves". Unfortunately, but also fortunately, money is freedom is this world. It allows us to do what we would have never been able to do before. It drove innovation, science and business. It is business.. Coolidge has great intentions, but his ways of going about were horrendous, to only tax the top 2% grossing. An assumption and opinion, but his way is similar to today's corporate tax. We have the highest in the world, yes we receive less on a percentage scale then almost any other country. What if taxes were lower in the first place? Would we not have this problem? It's not a problem on a corporate level, it's if you have wealth. And everyone who has money stows it off shore. I would too!

I'll take a stand along side, the Revenue Act could have been a causation of the Great Depression. The elimination of the federal income tax had flooded the market, as the Federal reserve was up 60% at one point. As a result, the was a huge bubble in the stock market like the tech-bubble of the 2000's. But still a necessity. Although we can't come to any logical conclusions, I can't see any positive result from keeping the progressive tax rates. Eventually, wealth would find a loophole.

Sum of ratings:2 (1)

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A Caring President
by [Kendra Helgeson](#) - Monday, April 20, 2015, 3:40 PM

I find myself agreeing with Coolidge's position on taxation. He really wanted to make sure that Americans were going to be able to live comfortably even with taxes because he cared. The tax system before had been taking too much from workers, making it harder and harder to provide correctly for their families and themselves.

A few lines he spoke that really stood out to me were:

- "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."
- "I want the people to be able to work less for the government and more for themselves."
- "Until we can reestablish a condition under which the earnings of the people can be kept by the people, we are bound to suffer a very severe and distinct curtailment of our liberty."

Coolidge expressed in these lines and others that he was worried about Americans and their well being. Working long hours and only making a small amount of money is hard to do weekly, or even daily for some people. The only thing he could have done more of in his speech is talk more about what he planned to do to make sure it happened.

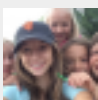
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Re: A Caring President
by [Delaney Crook](#) - Tuesday, April 21, 2015, 5:01 PM

I completely agree with the lines from Coolidge's speech that stood out to you, as they drew my attention as well. I think that these lines really gave valid and quality examples of why Coolidge wanted to lower these taxes. I agree with his stance that we, as citizens of the Unites States, should be able to work less for the government and more for ourselves. We do not get to see the benefits and rewards of our work as much as we should. While it our duty and responsibility as citizens to serve our nation, there is a point when the line needs to be drawn and we are being forced to give too much, and it is hurting us and our families. I also agree with the idea that this is a violation of our freedom and liberty as citizens. We do have a significant amount more freedom and liberty than those across the world, however, by having these taxes places it is decreasing that among of liberty we have, and until we can make it so we are earning what we work for, we are going to lack our complete liberty, as Coolidge stated.

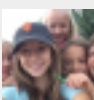
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Re: A Caring President - Taxation is Necessary
by [Kylee O'Connor](#) - Wednesday, April 22, 2015, 5:29 PM

Those sentences really stood out to me, as well. Like you said I think that it's good that he wanted people to be able to live comfortably even with taxes, but I feel like there is an undeniable need for balance in taxation. While American citizens need to be taxed for the good of the government, they should not be taxed such a heavy amount that they are not able to live "comfortably" on a daily basis. At the same time, what *is* living comfortably? It all depends on one's definition to determine whether or not someone is living adequately. Taxation is something that plays a significant and unavoidable role in our society; it is necessary to keep our government running. I think that it is unrealistic to think, especially during WWI era, that during his time taxes would be have been able to be lowered, like he suggested. So, although Coolidge might been "caring," I see some flaws in what he proposed.

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Coolidge's Views on Taxation
by [Kylee O'Connor](#) - Wednesday, April 22, 2015, 5:29 PM

In the video, all that Calvin Coolidge had to say about lowering taxation was something that would be beneficial in the eyes

of the majority of the American population. I mean, who doesn't want to "be able to work less for the government and more for themselves," as Coolidge put it. However, taxes help drive everything that goes on in American society. We, as American citizens, are very fortunate to live in such a thriving county. Without a large amount of taxes being paid to the government, there would be no money for roads, no military/national defense, no law enforcement, and many other necessary government-paid programs. Taxes are something that all American citizens have to pay. It is unfortunate, but something that is necessary to help our civilization continue to be successful. Overall, I feel like most of what Coolidge was saying was more people-pleasing than valid and possible to achieve.

Sum of ratings:1 (1)

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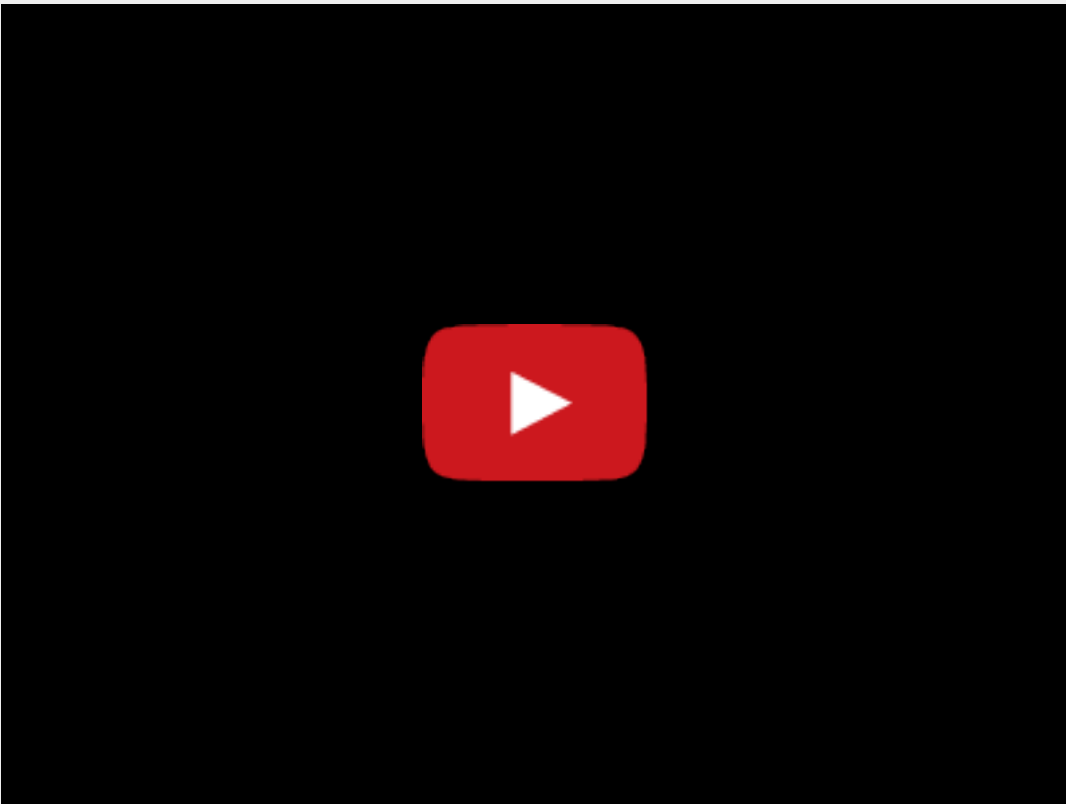
Government... it's not paying for it's self!

by [Adam Graves](#) - Friday, April 24, 2015, 3:36 PM

Taxes, the one thing that makes most people if not everyone cringe when they hear the word. It’s a great mystery to many and for most people including me can be difficult to understand how they work. Hence the huge business of tax preparation companies out there to help people file their taxes.

The graphs are interesting to look at. The first graph that showed the total tax revenue just gradually increasing very year until 2001 when, the first part of the “Bush Tax Cuts” took affect make it appear that it was going to just continue to go up, and up. I realize that there is a lot that taxes support and you always hear people say things like “I’m a tax paying citizen” and “what the heck are my tax dollars paying for?” Which even I have trouble relating to the system and would rather prefer a throw back year to 1913 where there was the simple form to fill out and the rate I was being charged was between 1-7 percent versus somewhere in-between 10-39 percent like the 2013 rates.

I realize that the government needs money to operate and pay for roads, agencies, and programs that make our government function. But is the system in place work? The video of the brothers who are splitting the bill on work done in their neighborhood is a classic example. I found it more comical then anything and realize it’s kind of a joke video explaining how the government taxes individual, but its message puts things into prospective. I know Joe didn’t want to focus on the top 1% income earners, but I found the video I posted the link to below to put things into perspective as well.



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Re: Great Video!

by [Kylee O'Connor](#) - Saturday, April 25, 2015, 11:58 AM

Thanks, I really enjoyed the video you posted! It's crazy how skewed the average American's perception of wealth distribution is, but it's understandable seeing the mind-blowing amount of much money the top 1% has/earns.

Sum of ratings: (1)

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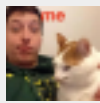
Re: Great Video!

by [Adam Graves](#) - Saturday, April 25, 2015, 1:05 PM

It is pretty amazing to see how the wealth is distributed. I was a little shocked to see this video from the first time as well. I realize the data is a little dated, but pretty sure that the data has only gone up in the favor for the top one percent. It is also hard to believe that some of these people make such a large income, and also own large companies that receive large amounts of corporate welfare to make even more wealth.

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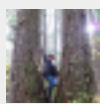
Re: Taxation by the Federal Government

by [Benjamin Bross](#) - Saturday, April 25, 2015, 1:51 PM

While I believe Coolidge had the best interests of the people in mind with all of his revenue acts, the way he went about it was wrong. By 1927 making it so only the top 2% in income paid federal income tax is completely unjust in my opinion. I believe that a progressive income tax is the best way to go about it. Currently, the 70%, 27%, 3% ratio that was shown in the second video may be a little too skewed, I think that progressive income tax is still a great idea on how to keep more money in the pockets of the people who need it most. I would probably divide it up as 65%, 30%, and 5%. This way, the people who are in low income brackets still pay substantially less than anybody else but do slightly more for our nation than what is required now. Also, while 65% is still massive amount for the upper income people to pay, it seems to be a far more reasonable amount that the wealthy would be happier to pay. Now, I get the people who say, "Why should I pay more because I worked harder?" I think it is necessary for all people to be able to live as comfortably in our nation as possible, and everybody paying the same amount would make it near impossible for the people of low income to ever escape that. The rags to riches story is what America is built on, and to make it nearly impossible to escape your current income level goes completely against that.

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Taxes and the United States

by [Mariah Turner-Macy](#) - Saturday, April 25, 2015, 3:40 PM

In terms of living in a materialistic world, I think it's upsetting that it's a main observation for American is money. The story of "who we are" changes on a day-to-day basis, for we are undergoing change every moment we are breathing. Of course, people want more money to buy more things and to have better life styles, but does money really buy happiness? I think it's just temporarily fulfilling, and need for security. There are also some regions of the world where people make less than a dollar a day, doing harder jobs that are given out in America, and barley having anything to eat or drink. Our "freedoms" are great in comparison, but I don't necessarily believe that freedom and taxes go hand in hand with one another.

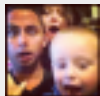
After watching the online video of Calvin Coolidge's speech, I do agree when he says, "I want the people of America to work less for the government ... and more for themselves". However, there isn't a way to get around taxes, especially if you are making more money than the lower and middle class. Although I thought the YouTube video of the three brothers was a little weird at first, it definitely explained how federal taxes work in the United States and I enjoyed the visualization. I am quite concerned if taxes were to rise in the next couple of years. As a matter of fact, I think taxpayers should have to contribute depending on their income instead of increasing the amount of taxes on the wealthier individuals.

I know this may seem odd, but I am definitely in the lower class when it comes to finances. I do have to take out loans and apply for Financial Aid every year, but the reason is more significant than the action... I want to obtain a higher education and seek out my goals in a career that will stabilize me and help lift me from the lower class into a job with more benefits than minimum wage. I think the upper class suffers more than the lower class, of course, they are financially secure to an extent; however, I don't think it's fair how much money is taken out of their paychecks and the amount they have to pay every year. I know it sucks not to feel secure working full time and barely being able to provide for rent and food each month, but those who have taken time out of their lives to get an education (for example, doctors) should not be penalized and pay more in taxes to make up for the lower classes. I think everyone should contribute a little bit of what they make in order to balance out the percentages.

I don't agree with or support some areas where our taxes go to in order to help the government and economy, and I am aware that is a selfish statement and maybe even "unpatriotic". However, that is also because I believe that freedom and taxes different from each other. One day I will be graduated from college with a degree... Not only will I be paying back my loans with interest from school, but now I have to consider the amount that I'm going to have to pay each year to the Federal Government, too.

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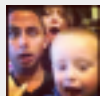
Re: Taxes and the United States
by [Adam Graves](#) - Saturday, April 25, 2015, 7:44 PM

I don't necessary disagree with your statements, and I think that there are lots of people that have similar feelings about the upper class having to pay higher taxes then middle to lower class individuals. You apologized for sounding unpatriotic, but I don't think you should feel that way. What you're talking about in sense is people being penalized for achieving the American dream. People, who've worked hard, did their time at school and now make a paycheck justifiable to their hard work. The one problem is that there is a percent of people that have racked up 100k or more and have let their loans go into default. That is my only problem is if you're going to use government loans to pay for school, and after school start making in upwards of 150,00 or more in salary and haven't paid a dime towards their loans. This is my only complaint about your argument. Below is a link to an article that exposed doctors and dentists that haven't paid back their loans.

<http://abcnews.go.com/Health/doctor-owes-government-thousands-dollars-unpaid-student-loans/story?id=26376289>

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Tax Relief
by [Adam Graves](#) - Saturday, April 25, 2015, 6:58 PM

It's interesting to listen to Coolidge's video about taxes; the best part was how uncharismatic he was. When income tax started in 1913 when Wilson signed in the 16th Amendment to the Constitution that implemented the first income tax, the hope was to *"reduce the power and privileges of wealthy Americans by requiring them to pay taxes on a greater percentage of their income than the poor."* Pg 738 textbook even if it was only a difference from 1% versus 7% that the rich paid on income.

Coolidge with the passing of the Revenue Act of 1926 *"slashed the high income and estates taxes that progressives had pushed through Congress during the First World war."*pg814 textbook The passing of this act helped out the wealthy by reducing their tax rate. I think the hope was to lower taxes and in return people would use their excess money stimulating the economy. The problem was that the lower and middle class used larger portions of their income to barely scrape by. Where the upper class merely benefited from getting to now keep the extra cash that they were previously being taxed.

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