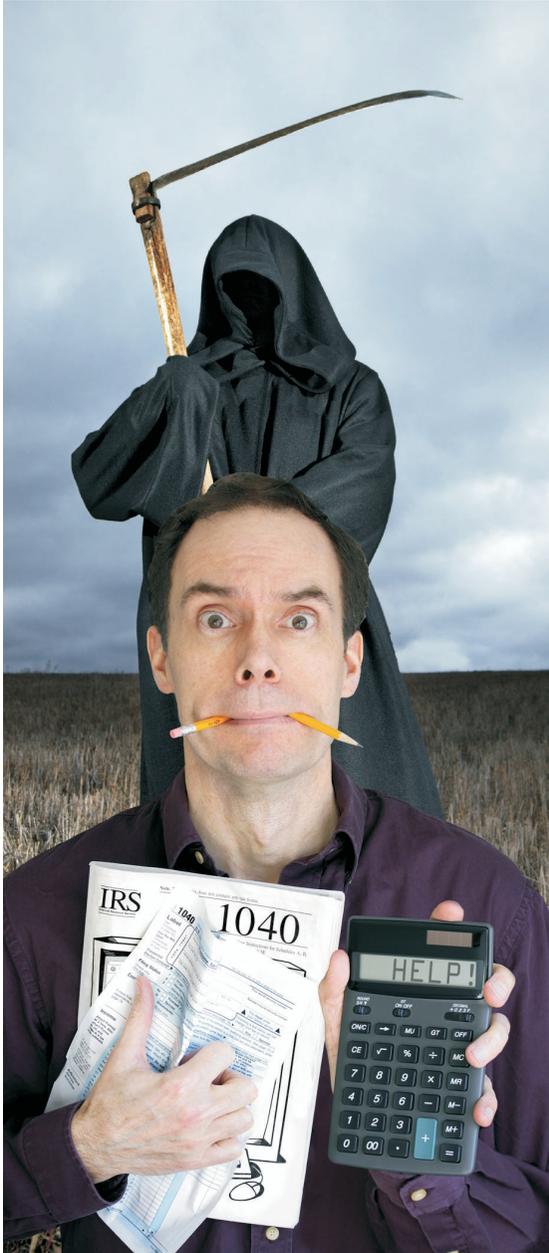


Taxes Generally



Taxes Generally

As certain as death and taxes.

— Daniel DeFoe

Tis impossible to be sure of any thing but Death and Taxes.

— Christopher Bullock

Death and Taxes, they are certain.

— Edward Ward

Death and taxes are inevitable.

— Thomas Chandler Haliburton

Our Constitution is in actual operation; everything appears to promise that it will last; but nothing in this world is certain but death and taxes.

— Benjamin Franklin

We have long had death and taxes as the two standards of inevitability. But there are those who believe that death is the preferable of the two. "At least," as one man said, "there's one advantage about death; it doesn't get worse every time Congress meets."

— Erwin N. Griswold

Another difference between death and taxes is that death is frequently painless.

— Anonymous

Death and taxes and childbirth. There's never any convenient time for any of them.

— Margaret Mitchell
(*Gone With the Wind*)

Death and taxes may be inevitable, but they shouldn't be related.

— J.C. Watts Jr.

Taxes: Of life's two certainties, the only one for which you can get an automatic extension.

— Anonymous

[T]axation, in reality, is life. If you know the position a person takes on taxes, you can tell their whole philosophy. The tax code, once you get to know it, embodies all the essence of life: greed, politics, power, goodness, charity.

— Sheldon S. Cohen

Taxation . . . makes us all part owners of each others' wages just as the stock market allows us to share ownership of each others' physical capital. Society gains tax revenue when anyone makes more income; it loses tax revenue when anyone loses income. As a result, income taxes lead to some diversification of our human capital risks by forcing us to share them with others.

— Jonathan Lipow

[The Internal Revenue Code is] about 10 times the size of the Bible — and unlike the Bible, contains no good news.

— Don Nickles

Only God knows where we got our tax system.

— Sam Gibbons

Taxation, for example, is eternally lively; it concerns nine-tenths of us more directly than either smallpox or golf, and has just as much drama in it; moreover, it has been mellowed and made gay by as many gaudy, preposterous theories.

— H.L. Mencken

One great advantage in America is, that there is nobody to overshadow men of moderate property; no swaggering, shining, tax-eating wretches to set examples of extravagance, pride and insolence to your sons and daughters, who are brought up in the habit of seeing men estimated, not according to the show that they make, not according to their supposed wealth, not according to what is called *birth*, but according to the real intrinsic merit of the party: this is a wonderful advantage.

— William Cobbett

America's tax laws are similar to the writings of Karl Marx and the writings of Sigmund Freud in that many of the people who loudly proclaim opinions about these documents have never read a word of them.

— Jeffery L. Yablon

[Tax law jurisprudence is] a field beset with invisible boomerangs.

— Robert H. Jackson

If a client asks in any but an extreme case whether, in your opinion, his sale will result in capital gain, your answer should probably be, "I don't know, and no one else in town can tell you."

— James L. Wood

Blessed are the young, for they shall inherit the national debt.

— Herbert Hoover

Philosophy teaches a man that he can't take it with him; taxes teach him he can't leave it behind either.

— Mignon McLaughlin

No taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant.

— George Washington

Every year, the night before he paid his taxes, my father had a ritual of watching the news. We figured it made him feel better to know that others were suffering.

— Narrator, *The Wonder Years* television series

Earth gets its price for what Earth gives us; The beggar is taxed for a corner to die in.

— James Russell Lowell

You must pay taxes. But there's no law that says you gotta leave a tip.

— Morgan Stanley
(advertisement)

Pothinus: Is it possible that Caesar, the conqueror of the world, has time to occupy himself with such a trifle as our taxes?

Caesar: My friend, taxes are the chief business of a conqueror of the world.

— George Bernard Shaw
(*Caesar and Cleopatra*)

More taxes were raised [by England] per capita in the war against Napoleon than in the war against Hitler.

— Andrew Lambert

The term “tax humor” is no doubt an oxymoron to many people; to the more cynical, it is an apt description of the entire tax code.

— John F. Iekel

Tax issues are fun. Getting to love them may take a bit of effort, but the same is true for Beethoven's string quartets, and think of how much pleasure they give if one does make the effort.

— Peter L. Faber

A fine is a tax for doing something wrong. A tax is a fine for doing something right.

— Anonymous

Taxes are a penalty on progress.

— James R. Cook

We are told that this is an odious and unpopular tax. I never knew a tax that was not odious and unpopular with the people who paid it.

— John Sherman

You know we all hate paying taxes, but the truth of the matter is without our tax money, many politicians wouldn't be able to afford prostitutes.

— Jimmy Kimmel

A citizen can hardly distinguish between a tax and a fine, except that the fine is generally much lighter.

— G.K. Chesterton

A punishment for a crime, such as a fine, is not the same as a tax on a course of conduct, though both involve directions to officials to inflict the same money loss. What differentiates these ideas is that the first involves, as the second does not, an offence or breach of duty in the form of a violation of a rule set up to guide the conduct of ordinary citizens. It is true that this generally clear distinction may in certain circumstances be blurred. Taxes may be imposed not for revenue purposes but to discourage the activities taxed, though the law gives no express indications that these are to be abandoned as it does when it "makes them criminal." Conversely the fines payable for some criminal offence may, because of the depreciation of money, become so small that they are cheerfully paid.

— H.L.A. Hart

The reward of energy, enterprise and thrift — is taxes.

— William Feather

The mounting burden of taxation not only undermines individual incentives to increased work and earnings, but in a score of ways discourages capital accumulation and distorts, unbalances, and shrinks production.

— Henry Hazlitt

Raising taxes encourages taxpayers to shift, hide and underreport income . . . Higher taxes reduce the incentives to work, produce, invest and save, thereby dampening overall economic activity and job creation.

— Kurt Hauser

People don't work to pay taxes; they work and invest for the after-tax return.

— Arthur B. Laffer

Taxation is a way of containing the rat race.

— Richard Layard

I don't know if I can live on my income or not — the government won't let me try it.

— Bob Thaves
("Frank & Ernest")

What is one really trying to do in the investment world? Not pay the least taxes, although that may be a factor to be considered in achieving the end. Means and end should not be confused, however, and the end is to come away with the largest after-tax rate of compound.

— Warren Buffett

Academicians and politicians have finally come to understand that it's the after-tax rate of return that determines people's behavior.

— Arthur B. Laffer

[C]apital migrates away from regimes in which it is treated harshly, and toward regimes in which it is free to be invested profitably and safely. In this regard, the capital controlled by our richest citizens is especially tax-intolerant.

— David Ranson

The government deficit is the difference between the amount of money the government spends and the amount it has the nerve to collect.

— Sam Ewing

Our view is that taxpayer dollars should be spent wisely or not at all.

— George W. Bush

It is not the heavily taxed realm which executes great deeds but the moderately taxed one.

— Old Asian Proverb

Neither will it be that a people over-laid with taxes should ever become valiant No people over-charged with tribute is fit for empire.

— Francis Bacon

Now the truth of the matter is that there are a lot of things people don't understand. Take the Einstein theory. Take taxes. Take love. Do you understand them? Neither do I. But they exist. They happen.

— Dalton Trumbo and Stuart Heisler
(*The Remarkable Andrew*)

Unquestionably, there is progress. The average American now pays out almost as much in taxes alone as he formerly got in wages.

— H.L. Mencken

Alexander Hamilton started the U.S. Treasury with nothing, and that was the closest our country has ever been to being even.

— Will Rogers

If you get up early, work late, and pay your taxes, you will get ahead — if you strike oil.

— J. Paul Getty

As of mid-2005, if you search the word "tax" on Google, you get about 127 million hits. If you search the word "love," you get about 149 million hits. This is comforting, but not overwhelmingly so.

— Jeffery L. Yablon

A person doesn't know how much he has to be thankful for until he has to pay taxes on it.

— Ann Landers
(quoting an anonymous source)

My father has a great expression: "The capital-gains tax has created more millionaires than any other government policy." The capital-gains tax tends to make investors hold longer. That is almost always the right decision.

— Chris Davis

Capital punishment: The income tax.

— Jeff Hayes

The best things in life are free, but sooner or later the government will find a way to tax them.

— Anonymous

As a people the Jews have always been small in number but gigantic in their impact on the course of civilization. Setting aside the religious aspect of Jewish history, their economic and political story has been one continuous struggle after another against outrageous taxation.

— Charles Adams

A tax can be a means for raising revenue, or a device for regulating conduct, or both.

— Felix Frankfurter

When it comes to meeting its funding requirements, a government has four basic choices as to what it can tax: income, wages, consumption or wealth.

— Michael J. Graetz

The justification for consumption taxes rests on their built-in incentives to save and invest. By exempting investment from taxation, consumption taxes encourage investment and discourages spending.

— Robert E. Hall and Alvin Rabushka

Basic tax, as everyone knows, is the only genuinely funny subject in law school.

— Martin D. Ginsburg

[Psychiatrist to tax accountant:] We both treat the same neurosis: what to declare and what to hide.

— Patrice Leconte and Jerome Tonnerre
(*Intimate Strangers*)

Those men would deserve the gratitude of ages, who should discover a mode of government that contained the greatest sum of individual happiness, with the least national expense.

— Giacinto Dragonetti

Pay Taxes — Build Rwanda — Be Proud.

— Billboard in Rwanda

Like mothers, taxes are often misunderstood, but seldom forgotten.

— Lord Bramwell

The models of motherhood we had did not serve us in the lives we led We were often the first female members of our families to stay in hotel rooms alone, to raise children alone, to face tax problems alone.

— Erica Jong

The way taxes are, you might as well marry for love.

— Joe E. Lewis

A fool and his money are soon parted. It takes creative tax laws for the rest.

— Bob Thaves
("Frank & Ernest")

We don't seem to be able to check crime, so why not legalize it and then tax it out of business?

— Will Rogers

You'd be surprised at the frivolous things people spend their money on. Taxes, for example.

— Nuveen Investments
(advertisement)

Loophole: To liberals, any provision of the tax code that fails to claim money earned, inherited, saved, or otherwise pocketed by known taxpayers.

— *The Conservative's Dictionary*

What Mae West said about sex is true about taxes. All tax cuts are good tax cuts; even bad tax cuts are good tax cuts.

— Grover Norquist

[Sex is] the last important human activity not subject to taxation.

— Russell Baker

Enjoy better sex! — Legalize and Tax Marijuana.

— Change the Climate, Inc.

You have to be oblivious to common sense to believe that taxing people who do work and paying people who don't work results in more people working. That's just not the way the world works.

— Arthur B. Laffer

As taxpayers, we have quietly accepted the fact that our taxes will be spent to pay big bucks for all sorts of ugly, twisted metal to be displayed in front of or inside government buildings, in the name of "art" — art that was obviously never meant to give the public any enjoyment and often represented a thumbing of the artist's nose at the public.

— Thomas Sowell

I'm putting all my money in taxes — it's the only thing sure to go up.

— Anonymous

Baseball is a skilled game. It's America's game — it, and high taxes.

— Will Rogers

Investors get advice that leaves them hurt, from performance that is below benchmark and the high fees and taxes on the pittance that is left.

— Laurence Siegel

If you sell your soul to the Devil, do you need a receipt for tax purposes?

— Mark Russell

I'm proud to be paying taxes in the United States. The only thing is
— I could be just as proud for half the money.

— Arthur Godfrey

If you drive a car, I'll tax the street.
If you try to sit, I'll tax your seat.
If you get too cold, I'll tax the heat.
If you take a walk, I'll tax your feet.
Taxman!
Well, I'm the taxman. Yeah, I'm the taxman.

— The Beatles
("Taxman")

I feel so good come payday
I think of all the things I'm gonna buy when I pick up my pay
Don't you know but then they hand me that little brown envelope
I peep inside Lord I lose all hope
Cause from those total wages earned down to that net amount
that's due
I feel the painful sense of loss between the two.

— Jerry Leiber and Billy Edd Wheeler
("After Taxes")

How can I keep my arm around my woman
With Uncle Sam's hands in my pants?
If I can't pay the fiddler
How the hell am I gonna dance?
Don't mind kickin' in my fair share
I might even back up and say yes
But the big man plays, while the little man pays
So the hell with the IRS.

— Johnny Paycheck
("Me and the IRS")

Down to the Banana Republics
Down to the tropical sun
Go the expatriated Americans
Hopin' to find some fun
Some of them go for the sailing
Brought by the lure of the sea
Tryin' to find what is ailing
Living in the land of the free
Some of them are running to lovers
Leaving no forward address
Some of them are running tons of ganja
Some are running from the IRS.

— Jimmy Buffett
("Banana Republics")

The tax man's taken all my dough
And left me in this stately home
Lazing on a sunny afternoon
And I can't even sail my yacht
He's taken everything I've got
All I got's this sunny afternoon.

— Ray Davies
("Sunny Afternoon")

I know everybody's income and what everybody earns;
And I carefully compare it with the income-tax returns;
But to benefit humanity, however much I plan,
Yet everybody says I'm such a disagreeable man!
And I can't think why!

— William S. Gilbert and Arthur S. Sullivan
("Princess Ida")

My father always said that there's no free ride
You've got to make a sacrifice
With so many Prophets on the Lord's side
Even your soul has got a price
But talk is cheap it takes money to buy your freedom
And the tax man's knockin' at your door.

— Jimmy Buffett, Roger Guth, and Jay Oliver
("Carnival World")

I'm squared up with the USA.
 You see those bombers in the sky.
 Rockefeller helped to build them.
 So did I.
 I paid my income tax today.

— Irving Berlin
 (“I Paid My Income Tax Today”)

I know the game it's old and lame
 You're holdin' a flame for my name and my fame
 Livin' like Givens schemin' on Tyson
 But she got lucky cause he was a nice one
 But I ain't nice and I don't play that
 If it ain't tax I don't pay that

— Kool Moe Dee
 (“They Want Money”)

It's fun to charter an accountant,
 And sail the wide accountan-cy.
 To find, explore the funds offshore,
 And skirt the shoals of bankruptcy.
 It can be manly in insurance. We'll up your premium
 semi-annually.
 It's all tax-deductible,
 We're fairly incorruptible.
 We're sailing on the wide accountan-cy.

— Monty Python
 (“Accountancy Shanty”)

This country's taxes must be fixed
 And I know what to do with it
 If you think you're paying too much now
 Just wait 'til I get through with it.

— Harry Ruby and Bert Kalmer
 (“These Are The Laws of My Administration”
 from the Marx Brothers movie *Duck Soup*)

I hate taxes
Taxes gonna break my back I swear
Don't you know I paid a lot more than my share
You know I've thinkin' about movin' somewhere else
But I can't because I love America too much
Especially California
Yeah I guess I'm gonna have to pay these taxes
If I'm gonna live here.

— Robert Cray
("1040 Blues")

You work hard, you make money
There ain't no one in the world who can stop you
You work hard, you went hungry
Now the taxman is out to get you
You worked hard
And slaved and slaved for years
Break your back sweat a lot
Well, it's just not fair
He hates you, he loves money
And he'll steal your shit and think that it's funny
Like the Beatles he ain't human.

— Rick Nielson
("Taxman, Mr. Thief")

Skip a rope skip a rope . . .
Cheat on your taxes don't be a fool
Now what was that they said about the golden rule
Never mind the rule just play to win
And hate your neighbor for the shade of his skin
Skip a rope skip a rope . . .

— Jack Moran and Glenn D. Tubb
("Skip a Rope")

Some folks are born silver spoons in hand,
Lord, don't they help themselves, oh.
But when the taxman comes to the door,
Lord, The house looks like a rummage sale, yes.

— John Fogerty
("Fortunate Son")

You have many contacts
 Among the lumberjacks
 To get you facts
 When someone attacks your imagination
 But nobody has any respect
 Anyway they already expect you
 To just give a check
 To tax-deductible charity organizations

— Bob Dylan
 (“Ballad of a Thin Man”)

Don’t stress,
 Relax,
 Let life roll off
 Your backs
 Except for death and paying taxes,
 Everything in life is only for now!

— Robert Lopez, Jeff Marx, and Jeff Whitty
 (“For Now” from “Avenue Q — The Musical”)

When you were a child
 You were treated kind
 But you were never brought up right.
 You were also spoiled with a thousand toys
 But you still cried all night.
 Your mother who neglected you
 Owes a million dollars tax.
 And your father’s still perfecting ways of making ceiling wax.

— Mick Jagger and Keith Richards
 (“19th Nervous Breakdown”)

I love America, but I can’t spend the whole year here. I can’t afford the taxes.

— Mick Jagger

Whoever hopes a faultless tax to see, hopes what ne’er was, is not, and ne’er shall be.

— Alexander Pope

Unnecessary taxation is unjust taxation.

— Abram Stevens Hewitt

Collecting more taxes than is absolutely necessary is legalized robbery.

— Calvin Coolidge

Why is it inflationary if the people keep their own money, and spend it the way they want to, [but] not inflationary if the government takes it and spends it the way it wants to?

— Ronald Reagan

All taxation is an evil, but heavy taxes, indiscriminately levied on everything . . . are one of the greatest curses that can afflict a people.

— Brooks Adams

Tax reform is ultimately a decision about values.

— Bill Bradley

We have come to love income tax laws so much that we have chosen to have a lot of them. There are (1) the basic federal income tax, (2) the federal corporate alternative minimum tax, (3) the federal individual alternative minimum tax, (4) the federal computation of earnings and profits for dividends payable to shareholders other than 20% corporate owners, (5) the federal computation of earnings and profits for distributions to corporate shareholders that own 20% or more of the distributing corporation's stock, (6) state income taxes, departing in various ways from the federal rules, (7) state minimum taxes, departing in various ways from the federal rules, and (8) city income and minimum taxes, departing in various ways from both the federal and the state rules. The resulting loss of efficiency in our economy, and cost of private sector compliance are staggering.

— Gordon D. Henderson

The taxpayer — that's someone who works for the federal government but doesn't have to take a civil service examination.

— Ronald Reagan

Old Mack was fast as a bullet, mean as a hornet, as sure as income tax. He could do anything, find anything. You didn't order him to find a coon, you declared how many you wanted and what colors they should be, and he got them for you.

— Janisse Ray

Cheerios can lower cholesterol 4% in 6 weeks. To appreciate that number, give the IRS an extra 4%.

— Advertisement for breakfast cereal

Every time this country . . . has cut tax rates across the board, revenues went up and the economy grew.

— Jack Kemp

The math of the late 1980s was simple. Any company that exchanged its equity for debt was immediately worth more, courtesy of the U.S. tax code. And *every* company was thought to be ripe for such a maneuver.

— Roger Lowenstein

Taxes are paid in the sweat of every man who labors. If those taxes are excessive, they are reflected in idle factories, tax-sold farms and in hordes of hungry people, tramping the streets and seeking jobs in vain.

— Franklin D. Roosevelt

All taxation, however disguised, is a loss per se . . . it is the duty, and the sacred duty, of Government to take only from the people what is necessary to the proper discharge of the public service; and that taxation in any other mode is simply in one shape or another, *legalized robbery*.

— Richard Cartwright

We understandably hesitate to talk about law in explicitly moral terms. But tax has unavoidable moral and political dimensions.

— Edward J. McCaffery

My friends, don't you believe that our taxes are too high, too complicated, and utterly unfair?

— Ronald Reagan

Everyone who has anything to do with the tax code agrees it's just an unbelievable mess.

— Paul H. O'Neill

[The federal income tax system is] a disgrace to the human race.
— Jimmy Carter

We must care for each other more, and tax each other less.
— Bill Archer

Taxation is transactional and not cuneiform.
— Irving Loeb Goldberg

The hardest thing in the world to understand is the Income Tax.
— Albert Einstein
(attributed)

Count the day won when, turning on its axis,
This earth imposes no additional taxes.
— Franklin P. Adams

It's not what you make, it's what you keep.
— Anonymous

To the extent that you're lowering the [tax] rate on savings, you're essentially placing it on consumption.
— Alan Greenspan

Indoors or out, no one relaxes
In March, that month of wind and taxes,
The wind will presently disappear,
The taxes last us all the year.
— Ogden Nash

The taxing authority is an uninvited party to all contracts.
— Myron S. Scholes, Mark A. Wolfson, Merle M. Erickson,
Edward L. Maydew, and Terry J. Shevlin

If taxation is to be successful as a revenue producer in times of depression as well as in times of business prosperity, it must have a broad base as a foundation.
— John Nance Garner

Political liberty, the peace of a nation, and science itself are gifts for which Fate demands a heavy tax in blood!

— Honoré De Balzac

Censure is the tax a man pays to the public for being eminent.

— Jonathan Swift

Fear is the tax that conscience pays to guilt.

— Howard Aiken

Inflation is a form of tax, a tax that we all collectively must pay.

— Henry Hazlitt

We pay that tax [*i.e.*, tipping in restaurants] knowing it to be unjust and an extortion; yet we go away with a pain at the heart if we think we have been stingy with the poor fellows.

— Mark Twain

Black tax: The higher prices that black people have to pay for

(1) goods — often due to lack of large grocery stores, mass market discounters

(2) insurance, mortgages, loans

due to their ethnicity

[Used in a sentence:] *Buffy and Biff can get a lower rate on a home mortgage than Rasheed and LaShawna due to the black tax.*

— Urban Dictionary

Change of fashion is the tax levied by the industry of the poor on the vanity of the rich.

— Sébastien-Roch Nicolas De Chamfort

And anyone is free to condemn me to death

If he leaves it to nature to carry out the sentence.

I shall will to the common stock of air my breath

And pay a death tax of fairly polite repentance.

— Robert Frost

Once — just once — I'd like to be fixed up with a guy who earns in a year what I pay in taxes.

— Anonymous Female Lawyer

Friends and neighbors complain that taxes are indeed very heavy, and if those laid on by the government were the only ones we had to pay, we might the more easily discharge them; but we have many others, and much more grievous to some of us. We are taxed twice as much by our idleness, three times as much by our pride, and four times as much by our folly.

— Benjamin Franklin

[A]fter the outbreak of the Civil War, Congress realized the war's escalating cost could not be financed solely through debt, and it enacted legislation creating the first U.S. income tax and, to administer it, a new federal agency that we now know as the IRS. The wartime legislation also included an excise tax on alcohol at the hefty rate of \$2 per gallon. The tax was not enough to kill citizens' thirst for distilled liquor, but it made alcohol too costly to burn. Kerosene replaced alcohol as the main fuel for lamps.

— Martin A. Sullivan

Every society makes choices as to the tax systems that not only raise the necessary revenues to support government expenditures, but within that choice are inherent reflections of societal values. Not only does a society choose a tax system but the tax system becomes one of the basic institutions that in itself shapes and molds the society.

— Karen M. Yeager

By this time fashion had condemned the beard in every other country in Europe, and with a voice more potent than popes or emperors, had banished it from civilized society. But this only made the Russians cling more fondly to their ancient ornament, as a mark to distinguish them from foreigners, whom they hated. Peter [the Great], however, resolved that they should be shaven Wiser, too, than the popes and bishops of a former age, he did not threaten them with eternal damnation, but made them pay in hard cash the penalty of their disobedience. For many years, a very considerable revenue was collected from this source Those who were refractory, and refused to pay the tax, were thrown into prison.

— Charles Mackay

Men in America were so conditioned that they felt differently about taxes and about prices. The former was an involuntary taking; the latter a voluntary giving No one observed the obvious fact that in terms of total income of an individual it made no difference whether his money went for prices or taxes.

— Thurman W. Arnold

Give us day by day our Real Taxed Substantial Money bought Bread; deliver from the Holy Ghost whatever cannot be Taxed; for all its debts & Taxes between Caesar & us & one another.

— William Blake

[I will consult with others before raising taxes, unless the revenue is needed] for ransoming our person, for making our eldest son a knight, and for once marrying our eldest daughter.

— King John of England

When a new source of taxation is found it never means, in practice, that an old source is abandoned. It merely means that the politicians have two ways of milking the taxpayer where they had only one before.

— H.L. Mencken

The government taxes you when you bring home a paycheck. It taxes you when you make a phone call. It taxes you when you turn on a light. It taxes you when you sell a stock. It taxes you when you fill your car with gas. It taxes you when you ride a plane. It taxes you when you get married. Then it taxes you when you die. This is a taxal insanity and it must end.

— J.C. Watts Jr.

[W]hat are the inevitable consequences of being too fond of glory: — Taxes upon every article which enters the mouth, or covers the back, or is placed under foot . . . taxes on everything on earth and the waters under the earth.

— Sidney Smith

You wake up in the morning and have your first cup of coffee, you pay a sales tax. You go to your garage; you start your car; you pay an automobile tax. You drive to work; you pay a gas tax. You go to work; you pay an income tax. You turn on the lights; you pay an electricity tax. You flush the toilet; you pay a water tax. You fly somewhere; you pay an airport tax. You stay overnight; you pay a hotel occupancy tax. You call home; you pay a telephone tax. You finally get home; you pay a property tax. You turn on the TV; you pay a cable tax. Even when you die, you pay a death tax. You are taxed from the moment you wake up in the morning until the moment you go to bed at night. You're taxed from your cradle to your grave

— Frank Luntz

The Eiffel Tower is the Empire State Building after taxes.

— Anonymous

Abracadabra, thus we learn
The more you create, the less you earn.
The less you earn, the more you're given,
The less you lead, the more you're driven,
The more destroyed, the more they feed,
The more you pay, the more they need,
The more you earn, the less you keep,
And now I lay me down to sleep.
I pray the Lord my soul to take,
If the tax-collector hasn't got it before I wake.

— Ogden Nash

The schoolboy whips his taxed top; the beardless youth manages his taxed horse with a taxed bridle.

— Sydney Smith

Wealth has always gravitated towards those that take risk with other people's money, but especially so when taxes are low.

— Bill Gross

Thinking is one thing no one has ever been able to tax.

— Charles F. Kettering

A good new chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank is worth a \$10 billion tax cut.

— Paul H. Douglas

Taxes cause the most bad business decisions.

— James R. Cook

Tax hatred is what holds the Republican Party together.

— Bill Schneider

Men who prefer any load of infamy, however great, to any pressure of taxation, however light.

— Sydney Smith

We believe that it is our patriotic duty, as well as our personal interest, to divert more of the income we currently spend on taxes into personal savings.

— Mission Statement of the American Shareholder Association

The principle is this — that you ought not in a free country to lay a tax on the expression of political opinion — a tax on the diffusion of that information on public affairs which the spirit of our constitution makes the interest and concern of every subject in the State. Still more, you should not, by means of that tax, create such an artificial necessity for capital that you secure the monopoly of thought upon the subjects that most interest the public at large to a handful of wealthy and irresponsible oligarchs.

— Edward George Bulwer-Lytton

The mounting burden of taxation not only undermines individual incentives to increased work and earnings, but in a score of ways discourages capital accumulation and distorts, unbalances, and shrinks production.

— Henry Hazlitt

We have a system that increasingly taxes work and subsidizes non-work.

— Milton Friedman

If you want more of something, subsidize it; if you want less, tax it.
— Old Economic Adage

Taxing profits is tantamount to taxing success.
— Ludwig von Mises

We always get more of anything we tax less. So if you reduce the tax on sin, you'd probably get more sin.
— John Snow

[W]e should first tax things that we like the least, or dislike the most, as a society, before we tax human labor, and necessities . . . through a sales tax . . . So we should tax securities speculation first, before we tax labor. If you go to a store and buy \$1,000 worth of products, you pay a sales tax. You buy \$1 million worth of derivatives, you pay no sales tax!
— Ralph Nader

Everyone hates taxes, but the government needs to fund its operations, and some taxes can actually do some good in the process.
— N. Gregory Mankiw

Through taxation, the government shares in some of the investor's risk.
— Stephen Horan

People who complain about taxes can be divided into two classes: men and women.
— Anonymous

Tax pollution — not people.
— Gerry E. Studds

All taxes are a drag on economic growth. It's only a question of degree.
— Alan Greenspan

We contend that for a nation to try to tax itself into prosperity is like a man standing in a bucket trying to lift himself up by its handle.
— Winston Churchill

No nation ever taxed itself into prosperity.

— Rush Limbaugh

Substance controls over form, except where form controls over substance.

— Sheldon I. Banoff

Taxation under every form presents but a choice of evils.

— David Ricardo

Taxation of earnings from labor is on a par with forced labor.

— Robert Nozick

The sum total of the Gross National Product is several trillion dollars, of which one third is sent to the government in the form of taxes for the express purpose of being wasted.

— Dave Barry

There's nothing like self-interest to motivate behavior. When people ask me what are ways to pick out tax-efficient [mutual] funds, the first thing I say is, "Find out whether the manager has his or her own taxable dollars in the fund."

— Susan Belder

Was it Bonaparte who said that he found vices very good patriots? — "he got five millions from the love of brandy, and he should be glad to know which of the virtues would pay him as much." Tobacco and opium have broad backs, and will cheerfully carry the load of armies.

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

I shall never use profanity except in discussing house rent and taxes.

— Mark Twain

Woo-Hoo! I put a dollar under my pillow, and the tax fairy left me two quarters!

— Dave Coverly
("Speed Bump")

Politicians never accuse you of “greed” for wanting other people’s money — only for wanting to keep your own money.

— Joseph Sobran

Among the many other questions raised by the nebulous concept of “greed” is why it is a term applied almost exclusively to those who want to earn more money or to keep what they have already earned — never to those wanting to take other people’s money in taxes or to those wishing to live on the largess dispensed from such taxation. No amount of taxation is ever described . . . as “greed” on the part of government or the clientele of government.

— Thomas Sowell

[T]he tax system should not be treated as wholly divorced from morality.

— Terence Floyd Cuff

Why tribute? why should we pay tribute? If
Caesar can hide the sun from us with a
Blanket, or put the moon in his pocket,
We will pay him tribute for light; else, sir,
No more tribute.

— William Shakespeare
(*Cymbeline*)

Taxes grow without rain.

— Old Jewish Proverb

The thing generally raised on city land is taxes.

— Charles Dudley Warner

A lottery is a tax on people who are bad at math.

— Anonymous

The marvel of all history is the patience with which men and women submit to burdens unnecessarily laid upon them by their governments.

— William E. Borah

If a thousand men were not to pay their tax-bills this year, that would not be a violent and bloody measure, as it would be to pay them, and enable the State to commit violence and shed innocent blood. This is, in fact, the definition of a peaceable revolution, if any such is possible.

— Henry David Thoreau

I want to find out who this FICA guy is and how come he's taking so much of my money.

— Nick Kypreos

Last time I looked at a check, I said to myself, "Who the hell is FICA? And when I meet him, I'm going to punch him in the face. Oh my God, FICA is killing me."

— Shaquille O'Neil

All the Congress, all the accountants and tax lawyers, all the judges, and a convention of wizards all cannot tell for sure what the income tax law says.

— Walter B. Wriston

[P]eople don't complain about taxes because they are selfish or stingy. They complain because they simply don't believe they're getting their money's worth.

— Zell Miller

No matter what the objective of the spending program may be, government expenditures always constitute economic costs that are borne by taxpayers, lenders, or inflation victims.

— Hans F. Sennholz

There is a school which holds that critics of taxation levels merely want to opt out of the social contract, that they don't want to pay their "fair share" to help the least well off. No, what critics of taxation want is accountability.

— Daniel Henninger

We now in the United States have more security guards for the rich than we have police services for the poor districts. If you're looking for personal security, far better to move to the suburbs than to pay taxes in New York.

— John Kenneth Galbraith

Taxes are not levied for the benefit of the taxed.

— Robert A. Heinlein

Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.

— *New Testament*

When Jesus tells his audience to “render to Caesar” his point is not that they should pay their taxes like dutiful Roman citizens; his point is that they should be rendering their *selves* to God. When it comes to what people owe God, Jesus is saying, we are all in the very highest tax bracket.

— David T. Ball

When I was young, I was taught the story of Jesus and the taxman. The point was that Jesus was good to everyone; so much so that he could even eat with the taxman. The story tells a lot about being good, but it also tells a lot about historical perceptions of the tax collector.

— Christopher Bergin

[T]ax collectors and prostitutes are making their way into the Kingdom of God before you.

— *New Testament*

Our tax code is perhaps the second most remarkable book in Western civilization. Of only one other book can it be said, with equal conviction, that great minds have devoted countless hours to the scrutiny and learned exegesis of every passage; that differing interpretations of the text have given rise to some of humanity's most epic struggles; and that, while millions mine it for valuable insights and inspiration, those who claim to live by the book and follow its precepts probably far outnumber those who actually do so.

— J. Mark Iwry

Introduce a wise and efficient system of taxation, and life and energy will pervade the country. Without such a system, it will sink into general and fatal paralysis.

— *The Atlantic Magazine*

Taxes, after all, are dues that we pay for the privileges of membership in an organized society.

— Franklin D. Roosevelt

Inflation is taxation without legislation.

— Milton Friedman

If inflation is high enough, effective tax rates on capital can rise above 100%.

— Michael T. Darda

Because of the income tax, a penny saved is more than a penny earned.

— Jeffery L. Yablon

Any tax is a discouragement and therefore a regulation so far as it goes.

— Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr.

Taxes are what we pay for civilized society A penalty on the other hand is intended altogether to prevent the thing punished.

— Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr.

If Justice Holmes was correct that “[t]axes are what we pay for civilized society,” then the question in this case is how much civilization the taxpayers will be required to purchase.

— Homer Thornberry

Although, Mr. Justice Holmes said: “Taxes are what we pay for civilized society,” too many citizens want the civilization at a discount.

— Henry Morgenthau

Crime had to be committed before liability for the imposition [of disputed levy on illegal liquor] arose. Taxes are not so conditioned.
— Pierce Butler

A sales tax is a tax on the freedom of purchase.
— Felix Frankfurter

The sales tax seems to be more politically acceptable than the income tax.
— Raymond C. Scheppach

A use tax is a tax on the enjoyment of that which was purchased.
— Felix Frankfurter

There are some taxes that are good for our economy, because they discourage harmful activities.
— David M. Roodman

An old tax is a good tax.
— Old Folk Saying

Borrowing imposes a hidden burden upon taxpayers in the short run and an explicit burden in the long run, while taxes impose an explicit short-run burden and a more hidden burden in the long run.
— Richard K. Vedder and
Lowell E. Gallaway

There is no abstract justice in any system of taxation.
— Owen J. Roberts

The law of taxation is more concerned with the substance of economic opportunity than with classifying legal concepts, and tagging them with names and labels.
— Benjamin N. Cardozo

Virtually all persons or objects in this country . . . may have tax problems. Every day the economy generates thousands of sales, loans, gifts, purchases, leases, wills and the like, which suggests the possibility of tax problems for somebody. Our economy is tax relevant in almost every detail.

— Potter Stewart

Put not your trust in money, but put your money in trust.

— Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr.

Though tax records are generally looked upon as a nuisance, the day may come when historians will realize that tax records tell the real story behind civilized life. How people were taxed, who was taxed, and what was taxed tell more about a society than anything else. Tax habits could be to civilization what sex habits are to personality. They are basic clues to the way a society behaves.

— Charles Adams

Moral turpitude is not a touchstone of taxability.

— Frank Murphy

And Samuel told all the words of the Lord unto the people that asked of him a king. And he said, This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: . . . he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants. And he will take your menservants, and your maidservants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants. And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the Lord will not hear you in that day.

— *Old Testament*

He [the King] will place a tax on the air you breathe and on the bread you eat; he will give you a legislation which is as legitimate as it is unjust and instead of reasons, he'll give you laws. These will grow in the course of time, until you no longer exist for yourselves but for others.

— Franz Grillparzer
(*Libussa*)

. . . For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent. . . .
— The Declaration of Independence

Over-taxation cost England her colonies of North America.
— Edmund Burke

Taxes rise with inflation, however caused or to whatever extent, whether temporary or permanent; and depression, be it ever so great, and whether caused by imaginary difficulties or by war or famine, lessens the demand for contribution in a corresponding ratio.
— Nathan Clifford

Almost all taxes on production fall finally on the consumer.
— David Ricardo

When King Philip of France expelled the Jews in 1306, the reason given was that they charged excessively high interest rates. However, he did not cancel the debts owed to Jews, but instead set about collecting them for his own treasury. To his disappointment, the king discovered that the money collected in this way was less than the taxes that Jews had been paying.
—Thomas Sowell

Natural rights, so called, are as much subject to taxation as rights of less importance.
— Benjamin N. Cardozo

The tax which will be paid for education is not more than the thousand part of what will be paid if we leave the people in ignorance.
— Thomas Jefferson

The ideologists of taxation are constantly attributing their own preferences to some higher disinterested wisdom.
— Louis Eisenstein

Failure to use tax money to finance things not liked by the taxpaying public is routinely called “censorship.”
— Thomas Sowell

For there to be relief, there has to be an affliction, an afflicted party, somebody who administers the relief, and an act in which you are relieved of the affliction. The reliever is the hero, and anybody who tries to stop them is the bad guy intent on keeping the affliction going. So, add “tax” to “relief” and you get a metaphor that taxation is an affliction, and anybody against relieving this affliction is a villain.

— Bonnie Azab Powell

Taxation is eminently practical, and is in fact brought to every man’s door.

— Rufus W. Peckham

Trade being a sensitive plant, a direct tax upon it to some extent at least deters trade even if its effect is not precisely calculable.

— Felix Frankfurter

The payment of taxes gives a right to protection.

— James M. Wayne

[Tax] liability is one of the notorious incidents of social life.

— Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr.

Visibility enables individuals and businesses to know the true cost of transactions. It also enables them to see what their total tax liability is and to which level of government it is being paid. When a tax is not visible, it can be easily retained or raised with little, if any, awareness among taxpayers about how the tax affects them.

— Tax Division of the American Institute of
Certified Public Accountants

The idea that jobs, businesses and wealth follow low tax rates is widely accepted.

— Stephen Moore

Those who can do a good trade don’t wrangle over taxes.

— Old Chinese Proverb

In my own case the words of such an act as the Income Tax, for example, merely dance before my eyes in a meaningless procession; cross-reference to cross-reference, exception upon exception — couched in abstract terms that offer no handle to seize hold of — leave in my mind only a confused sense of some vitally important, but successfully concealed, purport, which it is my duty to extract, but which is within my power, if at all, only after the most inordinate expenditure of time.
— Learned Hand

[T]o tax and to please, no more than to love and to be wise, is not given to men.
— Edmund Burke

Since the purpose of the tax code is to raise revenue, it has as its core mission the objective of making people poorer. The central question is: who?
— Douglas Holtz-Eakin

Has [the tyrant] not also another object which is that [the people] may be impoverished by payment of taxes, and thus compelled to devote themselves to their daily wants and therefore less likely to conspire against him?
— Plato

Taxation is, in fact, the most difficult function of government and that against which their citizens are most apt to be refractory.
— Thomas Jefferson

There are those who seem to have nothing else to do but to suggest modes of taxation to men in office.
— Robert Peel

Peter [the Great] in 1708 created a service of revenue officers, men whose duty it was to devise new means of taxing the people. Called by the foreign name “fiscals,” they were commanded “to sit and make income for the Sovereign Lord.” . . . There was a tax on births, on marriages, on funerals and on the registration of wills. There was a tax on wheat and tallow. Horses were taxed, and horse hides and horse collars. There was a hat tax and a tax on the wearing of leather boots. The beard tax was systemized and enforced, and a tax on mustaches was added. Ten percent was collected from all cab fares. Houses in Moscow were taxed, and beehives throughout Russia. There was a bed tax, a bath tax, an inn tax, a tax on kitchen chimneys and on the firewood that burned in them. Nuts, melons, cucumbers, were taxed. There was even a tax on drinking water.

— Robert K. Massie

The income tax created more criminals than any other single act of government.

— Barry M. Goldwater

If the Nation is living within its income, its credit is good. If, in some crises, it lives beyond its income for a year or two, it can usually borrow temporarily at reasonable rates. But if, like a spendthrift, it throws discretion to the winds, and is willing to make no sacrifice at all in spending; if it extends its taxing to the limit of the people’s power to pay and continued to pile up deficits, then it is on the road to bankruptcy.

— Franklin D. Roosevelt

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed.

— *New Testament*

Of course [the Orthodox Jewish dietary laws] are inconvenient at times, but not nearly as inconvenient as paying the federal income tax.

— Herman Wouk

There is no such thing as a good tax.

— Winston Churchill

It was as true . . . as taxes is. And nothing's truer than them.

— Charles Dickens

Taxation must affect the distribution of income, whether we will it so or not.

— Henry C. Simons

Taxation is paying your dues, paying your membership fee in America.

— George Lakoff

We pay taxes not because we get benefits from the state, but because it is as much our duty to support the state as to support ourselves or our family; because, in short, the state is an integral part of us.

— Edwin R.A. Seligman

I like to pay taxes. With them I buy civilization.

— Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr.

If this is the price we pay for our society, shouldn't we be getting a little more civilization or a lot lower price?

— Thomas G. Dolan

Holmes got it precisely wrong. In fact, I would argue that the level of taxation and of government regulation is a measure of our failure to civilize our society.

— Edward H. Crane

[T]axes have become the price we pay to support people who deny our civilization.

— Malcolm Wallop

The institution of taxation is not a civilized but a barbaric method to fund anything . . . it amounts to . . . a gross violation of human liberty.

— Tibor R. Machan

I like to pay taxes. It makes me feel less guilty.

— Anonymous Member of a
Two-Income Couple

I am thankful for the taxes I pay because it means that I'm employed.
— Nancie J. Carmody

[E]very real American is proud to carry his share of any burden
I simply do not believe for one second that anyone privileged to live in
this country wants someone else to pay his fair and just share of the cost
of his Government.
— Dwight D. Eisenhower

Do you know what the taxes are on five million dollars? Six million
dollars.
— Marianne and Cormac Wibberley
(*National Treasure: Book of Secrets* screenplay)

[The tax code] is a monstrosity and there's only one thing to do with
it. Scrap it, kill it, drive a stake through its heart, bury it and hope it
never rises again to terrorize the American people.
— Steve Forbes

I think our tax system is not worthy of an advanced society.
— Paul H. O'Neill

The physical power to get the money does not seem to me a test of
the right to tax. Might does not make right even in taxation.
— Robert H. Jackson

The incidence of taxation depends upon the substance of a transac-
tion.
— Hugo L. Black

Taxes are the lifeblood of government and no taxpayer should be
permitted to escape the payment of his just share of the burden of
contributing thereto.
— Arthur T. Vanderbilt

1. Tax Luxuries.
2. Tax Inheritances.
3. Tax Large Incomes.
4. Tax Monopolies.
5. Tax the Privileged Corporation.
6. A Tariff for Revenue.
7. Reform the Civil Service.
8. Punish Corrupt Officers.
9. Punish Vote Buying.
10. Punish Employers who Coerce their Employees in Elections.

This is a popular platform of ten lines. We recommend it to the politicians in place of long-winded resolutions.

— Joseph Pulitzer

Man is not like other animals in the ways that are really significant: animals have instincts, we have taxes.

— Erving Goffman

When we played, World Series checks meant something. Now all they do is screw up your taxes.

— Don Drysdale

The invention of the teenager was a mistake. Once you identify a period of life in which people get to stay out late but don't have to pay taxes — naturally, no one wants to live any other way.

— Judith Martin
(writing as "Miss Manners")

There's nothing wrong with the younger generation that becoming taxpayers won't cure.

— Dan Bennett

The expenses of government, having for their object the interest of all, should be borne by everyone, and the more a man enjoys the advantages of society, the more he ought to hold himself honored in contributing to those expenses.

— Anne Robert Jacques Turgot

Any intelligent thinking on taxes eventually reaches the ultimate purpose of life on this planet as each of us conceives it.

— Louis Eisenstein

Those figures are after tax, but before spin.

— *The Wall Street Journal*
 (“Pepper . . . and Salt”)

[I]n most situations, the changes that taxes induce are symptoms of economic waste or, using economic jargon, inefficiency. In the absence of taxes, people and businesses react to prices that approximately reflect the true social costs and benefits of what they buy and sell, and taxes can turn prices from being pretty good signals of social cost and benefit into very bad ones.

— Joel Slemrod

Taxes send messages, and in several ways. They affect the costs and returns to different kinds of activity, thereby influencing patterns of use of capital and labor. They also make statements about the relative desirability of different types of activity and patterns of conduct. Conduct that carries a low tax induces people to emulate that conduct. Conduct that carries a high tax discourages such conduct.

— Edward J. McCaffery and Richard E. Wagner

Tax subsidies cause Americans to overinvest in oversized homes.

— Robert J. Samuelson

[I]n one sense the tax structure is art — a subsuming of the infinite muddle of human activity under a single rubric, as though it had a single purpose and could be ordered by a mind heaving the line of a single vision.

— John Casey

I thought at first that the power of taxation [given in the new Federal Constitution] might have been limited. A little reflection soon convinced me it ought not to be.

— Thomas Jefferson

It would be a hard government that should tax its people one-tenth part of their income.

— Benjamin Franklin

We shall now embark on a voyage through the various sections of the Income Tax Regulations which are enough to boggle the mind of an English-speaking U.S. Citizen.

— William A. Goffe

Our tax code is so long it makes *War and Peace* seem breezy.

— Steven LaTourette

The tax law is six times longer than *War and Peace* and not nearly as easy to read.

— Michael J. Graetz

He [fellow U.S. Sen. Russell B. Long] knows the Tax Code as thoroughly as the Pope knows the Lord's Prayer.

— William Proxmire

Don't tax you, don't tax me;
Tax the fellow behind the tree.

— Russell B. Long

Don't tax you. Don't tax me.
Tax the companies across the sea.

— Dan Rostenkowski

When it comes to finances, remember that there are no withholding taxes on the wages of sin.

— Mae West

The wages of sin are death, but by the time taxes are taken out, it's just sort of a tired feeling.

— Paula Poundstone

Cursed war and racking tax
Have left us scarcely raiment to our backs.

— Sir Walter Scott

Misera contribuens plebs.
(The poor taxpaying people.)

— Law of the Hungarian Diet of 1751,
Article 37

Peace and prosperity are inversely proportional to the level of
taxation.

— John Pugsley

Work and earn; pay taxes and die.

— Old German Proverb

More Americans pay taxes than vote.

— J. Robert Kerrey