

All taxation is theft

A presentation by Professor Ian Angell

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in a debate with Sir Nicholas Montague, former head of H.M. Inland Revenue

“... Thus began the fierce endeavour of the State to squeeze the population to the last drop. Since economic resources fell short of what was needed, ... [t]he full rigour of the law was let loose on the population. Soldiers acted as bailiffs, or wandered as secret police through the land. Those who suffered most were, of course, the propertied class. It was relatively easy to lay hands on their property, and in an emergency, they were the class from whom something could be extorted, most frequently and quickly...”

Sounds familiar? No, this isn't today's Britain, with its middle classes ravaged by stealth taxes, speed cameras, national insurance, income tax, death duties, VAT, petrol, alcohol, tobacco duty, community charges etc. This is a quotation from *The Cambridge Ancient History*, on the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. There's nothing new under the sun. Once again the State is predator. Look closely at today's Britain, and the same signs are there: such is the end of Empire.

“...If the propertied class buried their money, or sacrificed up to two-thirds of their estates to escape ... ; or went so far as to give up their whole property in order to get free of the domains rent, and while the non-propertied class just ran away, the State replied by increasing the pressure...” This is why such large hoards of Roman gold and silver are still being unearthed. The owners were hiding their wealth, not from barbarians, but from the swarms of state registered looters.

Don't think that this couldn't happen in a democracy. According to Alexander Tytler, an 18th century philosopher: “a democracy cannot exist as a permanent form of government. It can only exist until a majority of voters discover that they can vote themselves largesse out of the public treasury” – out of taxation.

In the new globalized socio-economic conditions, governments chosen by the majority are governments chosen by losers. They are losers because labour has become a commodity, and must compete on price. The International Labour Organization calculates that nearly a billion workers have entered the global job market. Why should the world's sub-employed all live in developing countries? Automation and exportation of jobs is sending shock waves through western workforces previously protected by national interests, but which are now incapable of fending off foreign incursions. Because of the minimum wage, companies are lowering staffing levels. It is no accident that most are instigating downsizing, delaying

and outsourcing programmes.

Because of computerised production, the structured world of semi-skilled labour, that arose out of the industrial revolution, is now disintegrating. In the UK today, more people are working in Indian restaurants than in the iron & steel, shipbuilding and coal industries combined¹.

Meanwhile, the politicians still pretend to be in control. Trust me, “I’m from the government and I’m here to help” (which according to President Reagan are the nine most terrifying words in the English language). Politicians, both the knaves and the naive, pander to the masses. They say they can conjure up hundreds of thousands of new jobs for the huge number of soon-to-be-unemployed. What a nerve! Businesses create jobs, governments create non-jobs and pensions-in-waiting, all paid for by taxes, and in doing so tax real jobs out of existence.

Today, productivity is delivered by a technology needing only a few machine minders. A typical factory employs one man and a dog. The man is there to feed the dog, and the dog insures that the man doesn’t touch anything. Growth is created from talent, not from low-grade labour. It has been decoupled from employment. National economies can no longer grow themselves out of unemployment. A large population, particularly an uneducated and ageing population, is a now liability: a major problem facing all Western governments. The twentieth century, the century of the masses, is over. A degenerate political system based on manipulating those masses is over too, but it won’t go quietly.

Just as in Ancient Rome, they hang on by soaking the rich. Hence, the wealthy look to escape, taking with them as much of their wealth as possible, and a vicious circle of decline begins. A series of tiny tax hikes, each seeming so obvious, harmless, beneficial even, are the first steps on the road to perdition. There are no alarm bells; life goes on, only with each infringement, ethical standards drip away. Drip, drip, drip, until the floodgates open. Then instead of setting standards and punishing wrongdoers, the government is ‘at it’ themselves. Croneyism is rampant; government has become corrupt and corrupting.

Strapped for cash, they will steal (tax) anything in solid form. Taxes will inevitably rise on fuel, food, clothes and property. ‘Who guards the guardians?’ when morality collapses into vice. The ‘will of the people’, voting for full employment, a minimum wage, and fair taxation, is merely the turkeys voting for Christmas. To stay in power, the government needs to subsidize preferred voters, and so it will stuff the turkeys.

¹ Richard Scase

Don't think the other lot will make any difference. That's the trouble with elections, the government always wins. And if voting made a difference, they would have made it illegal. Whatever the government, they all face the same problem: income collapsing, and expenditure going through the roof. How dare Chancellors call it a budget, when they just steal even more from the public to pay for their mistakes.

To justify their tax take, the state professes a superior morality. However, the legitimacy of the state does not stem from any unassailable moral position, but from raw power: the domination of the individual by the tribe. This is the same immoral morality that deludes 'incorruptible' tax collectors and policemen as to the rightness of their legitimate brutality. Indeed, the enforcers of state power, preening themselves in this sanctimonious morality, are given the right to, nay the obligation to, invade the privacy of its citizens.

Consequently, the wealthy are losing their faith in the nation-state, which supports the profligate and penalizes the thrifty. The state no longer delivers its side of the Faustian pact, where the individual submits to the legitimate violence of the state in return for protection and security. Globalization has shown the James Bond myth, that the state is good and global corporations (Spectre) are bad, to be blatant propaganda on behalf of the nation-state: a morality tale told by tax-collectors. James Bond, the patron saint of civil servants, the thug of state, is now just another dirty old man.

The nation-state does not stand on some moral high ground, rather on a squalid collectivist doctrine: we are all equal in that we are all property of the state, or rather of the leaders of the state; and those leaders can dispose of its property as they see fit. All taxation is theft. It is the state obtaining money with menaces. Government is merely legitimate organized crime; and even the mafia doesn't charge 60%. Taxation without representation may be tyranny, but it's a lot cheaper than the alternative!

Ralph Waldo Emerson once visited David Thoreau in jail, where he had been imprisoned for non-payment of taxes. Emerson asked "why are you here?" to which Thoreau replied "why are you not here?" Thoreau saw himself as a prisoner of conscience, a political prisoner, and was asking why all free men were not acting in the same way, defending the right of the individual against coercion by government. The morality of the common good should not intimidate the wealthy. The 'Common Good' isn't good, it is merely common!

However the politicians are addicted to, and dependent on their tax take. They won't give up that easily, and they have found a new weapon: radio-frequency identification (RFID) tags. A tag, costing less than five cents, fitted in each banknote, will uniquely identify that note to every sensor it passes. The authorities will claim its purpose is to combat counterfeiting. Science fiction, you may think. The new 10,000 Yen

bills (~\$100) are to be implanted with Hitachi's 'mu-chip'. Each chip costs around a mere 50 Yen (soon to be 5Yen)! The EU is considering implanting tags in its notes. By insisting that only notes with operational tags are legal tender, governments may cancel the cash of any targeted individual - what a fantastic method for instantly taxing citizens, or destroying political opponents!

The state's database won't stop with money. In the name of homeland security, U.S. passports will soon contain an embedded tag. Holland already has tags in its ID cards. This will save the Dutch citizen any inconvenience of having to show the card on request – how thoughtful of the Dutch government.

Officials can validate a person's identity anywhere they have secreted a reader, and all without the permission or even awareness of that person. The world's national borders will soon be so equipped, thereby controlling the transnational flow of people. There'll be no more slipping through customs without paying duty, or carrying suitcases of money to Switzerland. The state will know who you are, everything you are carrying and wearing, and where you've been.

But why stop with ID cards. The tagging of pets has been very successful, so why not implant tags in everyone? Just like it says in the Book of Revelations, Chapter 13, verses 16 to 18:

16. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

17. And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

18. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.

The state is the beast, and its number is 666, the symbol of everything evil. Society will be turned into a Panopticon prison, where the Revenue can, not only calculate every tax bill, but also seize payment. “The complete delivery of the individual to the tyranny of the state, the final suppression of all means of escape not merely for the rich, but for everybody”²?

Then we can expect 'differential rights' for 'differentiated citizens', identified in a data-base and policed by smart ID cards. Party members, will use the card to gorge on benefits – euphemistically called entitlements, while opponents, trapped by their Ahnenpass, are harassed, suppressed, and worse. How long before 'Human Rights' becomes as outdated as the “Divine Right of Kings”?

2 Friedrich von Hayek

Rome used the threat of the Visigoths to extort penal taxes from its citizens. Today terrorism and organized crime are the equivalent justification. If parliament defines terrorism as ‘a threat to the financial viability of the state’, then tax collectors will have the right to sweat a suspected tax evader for 28 days without charge. You have been warned.

The US government may claim it is chasing narco-dollars, but it is using money-laundering laws to track down tax-flight dollars in Switzerland and Grand Cayman. Every global corporation is now at the regulatory sharp end of US extraterritorial muscle. Failure to comply will lead to the seizure of their dollar assets. Compliance with the demands of government: both in US and UK! That’s the next big issue for business; Sarbanes Oxley was just the start. Forget about computer hackers; government regulations are the ultimate denial of service attack on the corporate sector. It’s going to find itself knee-deep in compliance officers.

Don’t expect the EU to protect you. European politicians think that all businesses are run for their benefit, to pay for schemes that will buy them votes. Their tax freedom day is the end of June, a month later than ours, and we come six weeks after the US – they are in mid-April. The European Union is just another collectivist disaster waiting to happen: the USSR with a forty-year time lag – the EU-SSR. What do you get when you mix the British Pound (B£) with the EURO? The anagrammatic ROUB£E.

I have one piece of advice for you. “Start the day with a smile and get it over with”³, because you’ve got nothing to smile about, when all taxation is theft.

END of TALK