



TAX REVOLT: CAN IT BE DONE?

by Robin Gillespie

The idea of tax revolt is not new in the world. Tax revolts have happened periodically throughout history when levels of taxation reached a point where people could not both pay them and live.

However, the level of taxation which people could bear has constantly risen as the march of technology has made people's lives increasingly easier. In the eighteenth century economists predicted that a level of taxation equal to 25% of income would produce a revolt. Coincidentally, that was the last time we had a tax revolt in North America.

Today in Canada the tax burden from all levels of government is approximately 50% of income. People are becoming restless and angry but are unsure of what to do. Because it has been so long since a tax revolt was necessary, many people do not know if it will work. Well we have seen the beginning of it and it does work!

In California, after labouring for thirteen years, Jarvis and Gann got Proposition 13 before the voters, who passed it overwhelmingly. Despite the predictions of its opponents, its passage did not cause California to drop into the sea. Thousands of policemen and firemen were not laid off. Los Angeles did not burn to the ground and San Francisco was not looted by mobs. Since that time, a number of other states have adopted or been forced by their voters to adopt similar laws and politicians have not only had to change their talk about taxes and spending but have actually been forced to take action.

This can happen in Canada. Nine months ago three people sat down in a living room and drew up the Tax-payers' Charter. Later the same month 175 people turned out

for a public meeting to launch HALT. Forty of them joined. Today there are 1300 of you and the number is growing daily.

That is what three people achieved in nine months. What, then, can 1300 people achieve in the next nine months?

As our numbers grow, the politicians will pay more and more attention to us. They know that for every person who is concerned about an issue and does something about it - such as writing his MP or joining HALT - there are 800 more who feel the same way but have not yet done anything.

Politicians in Canada are no different from those anywhere else. They will do anything that is necessary to hold on to their offices. That even includes, as a last resort, cutting back on government power and spending and reducing our taxes. Because they are used to getting away with it, most politicians will try just talking about reducing taxes while continuing with "government as usual." They hope we will not notice their hypocrisy or forget it by the next election. This tactic has worked in the past but HALT will see to it that it does not work in the future.

We have made it HALT's business to find out where every politician stands on HALT's issues. You will be informed where their actions match their words. Once the politicians find out that the voters have a memory they will do what we tell them and they will leave our money alone.

For all this to happen you must get involved. Whether you donate money to support HALT's national programs or work with a HALT municipal group; whether you tell your friends and neighbours about HALT or keep them informed on whether your politicians are living up to their words, do something. It can be done - if you want to do it.

POLITICS: A STATEMENT OF POLICY

Because of the upcoming elections, some confusion has developed over what exactly HALT is and how we fit into the political process.

HALT is not a political party nor will it become one. HALT is a pressure group existing outside the political process. It is to function as an agency for the defence of Canadians and their property from governments. Politics is a process for the expropriation of one man's property for the use of another.

Due to the immoral nature of politics as it is practiced today we must not become involved in its mechanics.

It is HALT policy that no person holding political office will be accepted for membership in HALT and that any member who runs for political office must resign his membership.

HALT will support those candidates of any party whose policies and goals would advance our aims. We will do this by recommending them to our membership and to the public. However, we will remain separate from the political process.

HALT UPDATE

Since our last issue, HALT's activities have expanded considerably, with new areas of activity and new areas of the country being added.

The most important new project HALT has undertaken has been the establishment of local HALT groups to take up the HALT challenge with municipal governments. As of this writing, two very enthusiastic groups are active in Vancouver and Burnaby. Both groups are engaging in membership drives. The response was particularly encouraging in Burnaby, where nearly 30% of the municipal membership turned out for the founding meeting. Meetings scheduled for April include Surrey, which already has a core of angry taxpayers, Victoria, which has HALT's largest per capitus membership, and North Vancouver, where one of our more enthusiastic members, Lori James, not only found the meeting place but donated it to us.

In February, Winnipeg tax protester Don Oliver visited Vancouver and appeared with John Reynolds on CJOR Radio. His enthusiastic endorsement of HALT sparked much interest and many inquiries. Don agreed to join forces with HALT and is now HALT's Manitoba representative.

The word about HALT is spreading in other areas of the country as well. We have been corresponding with individuals in Alberta, Ontario and Nova Scotia who have contacted us for more detailed information about HALT and expressed interest in organizing in their provinces. In Saskatchewan one of our earliest supporters, Mr. D.D. Cranfield arranged to distribute 1000 copies of the last issue of the HALTER, coming to Vancouver personally to pick them up, and 1000 copies of a circular based on our handling of the Chew Gat Hoy incident. With this kind of support coming in from across the country it is clear that many, many people in Canada are more than just distressed about our level of taxation.

HALT continues to get outside publicity, both solicited and not. On February 28, President Mike Little spoke to the West Vancouver Rotary Club about HALT and how it could become the vehicle to break through Canadian apathy. On March 19 Vice-President, Walter Boytinck was tracked down to his Los Angeles hotel room by Dave Agar of radio station CKFM and interviewed on the Hour Toronto program. Walter was so effective that we received a flood of inquiries from Ontario. On March 21, Ed McKenzie of radio CJVI in Victoria interviewed Mike for their news program. This was brought on by our ad in the Victoria papers. On May 3, Director Richard Bolstler has been invited to take part in a panel addressing the Island Equipment Owners Association Equipment Show in Victoria. The expected 2000 attendees will be hearing HALT's position on taxation and small business.

HALT's newspaper advertising program began on March 18 and 19 with the placement of half-page ads in the Victoria Times and Colonist. Results from it were far less than encouraging. With the Federal (and now Provincial) Elections

coming up, a new approach was tried and a questionnaire ad appeared in the Victoria papers on April 3 and 4. Response so far is more promising, but it is still too early to judge the results. The questionnaire dealt with taxpayers' opinions on the level of taxation and the specific question of whether they would like to see a constitutional limit placed on taxation. The same questionnaire is being sent to all candidates of the Liberal, P.C. s and N.D.P. and the results of that survey will be presented to the HALT membership.

A further project will be undertaken by the local HALT groups, who will take the survey door-to-door and eventually make it truly nation-wide.

Finally, Mike Little is planning another trip to Ontario in early May. Mike will use the election to HALT's advantage and plans to make full use of media contacts.

A Contest

The previous issue of this newsletter was the first to be called The Halter. This name was chosen after a certain amount of discussion and we did have reasons for it. Unfortunately we neglected to mention them to anyone and a few of our members were offended by the name. The most common complaint was that it was sexually offensive.

We intended it to be offensive only to bureaucrats: we saw the government as an unruly horse that needed to have a halter put on it before it trampled the taxpayers. Be that as it may, we have decided to ask you to suggest a name for us.

All entries postmarked prior to June 15, 1979 will be eligible. Entries will be judged by the Board of Directors and the winning entry will become the name of this newsletter. The producer of the winning name will receive a 1 oz. silver bar - money that is (fiscally) sound.

And Another

One of our members, Bonne Posma, President of Saffronics Ltd. of Guelph, Ontario recently discovered a new guide for American taxpayers. It contains such suggestions as:

" . . . if you have a very high deductions in some area you should attach an explanation to the tax return for the IRS so that the large deductions doesn't trigger a worthless audit. If you have solid proof but don't help them with an explanation, they won't be able to function as smoothly, efficiently and profitably as they would otherwise. An audit where you have good evidence for the expense will simply cause the IRS to waste time asking you questions about a legitimate deduction. So help them out: every hour spent fruitlessly with you is an hour they could be questioning someone else, someone who perhaps *could* be squeezed a

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TAXATION AND YOU

By Richard Bolstler

One of the hallmarks of human progress was the discovery of the concept of the individual. With this breakthrough each man became a unique being unto himself and his most precious asset was his individuality. No longer was he just an interchangeable drone in some social hive. He was as important as the next person and could not be told what to do by king or commoner. No longer did he have to spend his life in servitude to others, receiving what little pittance his master deemed necessary for his survival. He was his own man! He could live where he liked, work at whatever he was able, and was entitled to keep every penny he earned, to be spent on anything he thought he needed. His rights to life, liberty and property were inalienable and governments existed for one purpose - to secure those rights and *nothing* more. Governments answered to the governed.

Canada was born when men held such beliefs. Canadians created one of the world's wealthiest nations out of nothing. This creation of wealth is tied inseparably to man's right to live free. We are a nation of individuals, each of us of supreme importance, each deciding individually how to better his own life. It is this private concern each of us bears for ourselves and our immediate circle of family and friends multiplied by 23,000,000 which guarantees our success.

Taxation graphically symbolizes the destructive force that opposes the concept of the individual as a being of importance. Taxation is a product of the dark ages of man's history; a system appropriate for building pyramids to the Pharaohs but not for building homes for men. To believe in the legitimacy of taxation is to believe that someone else is better suited to decide how to spend your money than you are. Taxes are forced payment for goods and services not voluntarily requested by anyone. It is the issue of force which separated taxes from common bills.

We receive bills for things we purchase voluntarily. We receive tax statements for things we might not buy if left to choose for ourselves.

If we are free men living in a free society then no one has a right to tell us how to spend our money. To give someone else this power would be to hold some men above other men in the eyes of the law. Such an act would contradict the basic principle of equality before the law.

You *are* free. The money you earn is yours to spend as you please without justification to anyone. Every cent is yours by right. It is wrong for someone to demand payment for services you don't want.

You have a right to choose how to spend your money. Without exception. Others may think that helping the needy overrides your right to choose. What in fact they are saying is that their decisions about the spending of your money should take precedence over your decisions. Their view of the needy must override your view. Their beliefs are superior to your beliefs. Kings once held that God favoured them with such superior powers. Who today should reign supreme over other men's values? The answer is *no one*.

In our society no one should have the right to initiate force against another. Altruistic or selfish intentions do not alter this principle. Taxation is expropriation of property backed up by force if necessary. At best, taxation is a lazy way of paying for services such as roads and police protection. But even here we balk at the idea of the citizens of Vancouver paying for a freeway in Edmonton. Taxation at its worst is nothing more than a legal plunder, a system which permits the building of monuments to corruption and extortion such as the Montreal Olympic Stadium.

Taxes interfere with man's right to self-determination in the market place. Taxation is just one more throwback to the stone age to be disposed of in the creation of a better world.

Donations

In our last issue we announced our need for office equipment. At this time we wish to publicly say thanks very much to Mr. John Crane of White Rock, B.C. who answered our call with an excellent desk, an office cabinet and a waste basket.

Don't stop yet, though. We are still in need of the following:

1. 4 desk lamps
2. Filing cabinets (legal size preferred)
3. 1 desk
4. Book cases

Volunteers

Since our last issue many people have come forward to help both with regular office work and special projects. There is always something to do, particularly with telephoning as our volume of calls increases. Please keep coming to us: your help is needed and will be greatly appreciated.

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little more.

"And we certainly wouldn't want the IRS, or our government to be inconvenienced, would we?"

Mr. Posma, being a public spirited citizen, concerned that National Revenue-Taxation should be able to fleece us as smoothly and efficiently as possible, made this suggestion:

"I believe a similar guide would be welcomed by patriotic and progressive Canadian taxpayers, and ask your support in announcing, through your publication, that my Company will pay \$100.00 to the person producing the most effective Canadian taxpayers guide, as determined by the executive of HALT."

Entries will be accepted until June 15th, 1979. It will, unfortunately, be too late to make use of the guide this year. However, HALT will make the guide available to our membership in time for taxes next year.

GOVERNMENT FIRED !

We at headquarters are not the only ones doing something about taxes. Many of you are carrying on your own battles with the tax authorities. We would like to hear from you about your projects and in each issue of the HALTER we will publish an item.

We are off to a good start with this issue: last month one of our Richmond, B.C. members, Mr. Klaus Kiel Nielsen, fired the government. The letter reproduced below was sent in on his 1978 tax return.

Subject: Note of Dismissal

My most dear PUBLIC SERVANTS this is to inform you that I who pay your wages see myself in the position that I must end your employment and this is to inform you that your wages are ended as of 1 April, 1979.

Any money or other form of wealth you may take from me by any and all means at your disposal, shall and will be regarded by me as an act of theft, robbery or fraud. I hereby withdraw my moral sanction from any and all acts you may take individually or collectively. In short you are totally on your own. YOU ARE FIRED.

You were hired to protect individual lives, the property of individuals and the freedoms of all individual men and women in this Nation. In return for that, you got security and fair payment. But you have broken the contract. You can regard your next paycheque as an act of theft, robbery or fraud against each individual citizen you meet from now on who is not payed by government of any type.

I, the producer of all the things you desire, shall continue to produce for my own private life only. You go look for another job.

Signed: Your former employer, Mr. K.E. Kiel Nielsen

Mr. Nielsen has the right idea for dealing with all bureaucrats. They must never for one moment be allowed to forget that THEY are OUR SERVANTS and that the reverse is not true.

Watch this space for further developments.

!!!books!!!

The three books described below provide a wealth of information and inspiration to anyone concerned about taxation. They are valuable both as sources of ideas and as incentives to action. We highly recommend them to our members.

A LEGACY OF SPENDING by Ed Murphy:

This is a horrifying compilation of government gone mad. Some of the information included here will make your hair stand on end; all of it is taken from government documents or newspaper reports. Must reading for every taxpayer.

HOW MUCH TAX DO YOU REALLY PAY by The Fraser Institute

If you think that income tax is your only problem, read this book. It shows that Canadians, regardless of income, pay about 50% of their annual earnings in taxes, both direct AND indirect.

THE LAW by Frederic Bastiat:

Originally conceived to safeguard the freedom of the individual, the law has been twisted into the main instrument by which this freedom has been undermined, with taxation being the worst offender. This little book, written in 1850, is as topical today as it was then.

- A LEGACY OF SPENDING \$3.00
- HOW MUCH TAX DO YOU REALLY PAY \$2.95
- THE LAW \$1.25

Please enclose 50¢ to cover **postage and handling**

Name: _____

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