

HIS VIEW: Tax Day and little change to believe in

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Tomorrow is April 15, known to many as "Tax Day." This is the day you must have your federal tax return (and your state return if you live in Idaho) either electronically transmitted or postmarked and in the mail to the appropriate agency.

I finished crunching numbers a couple months ago only to find that I had made a minor miscalculation in my W-4 exemptions when I started my new job. I failed to account for my unemployment benefits as taxable income and now, for the first time in the time I've had to file taxes, I'll need to send in a check.

My tax liability is only about \$200 to the IRS, but I've been putting off paying on a matter of principle. I'd really like to submit a letter in lieu of my payment indicating that I'm keeping what I owe as a "retention bonus."

Sadly, I'm just not that gutsy.

But maybe I should be.

I've often wondered what would happen if taxes were paid directly instead of being deducted from wages. Imagine how different things would be if everyone had to actually pay a tax bill instead of just having the money magically disappear from their check.

At least we would be able to change our mindset around taxes from a celebratory "I'm getting money back" to "I grossly overpaid what I owe in taxes, and those greedy bastards at the IRS didn't even pay me interest on it!"

Subsidies such as those paid to tobacco farmers, who can't seem to sell their crops because the government also is spending billions in national anti-smoking advertising,

would go away. Unnecessary bloating in the halls of Congress also would disappear as taxpayers felt that they're actually footing the bill for our country's budget.

But mostly a change to the system might get our leaders out of the mindset that taxpayer dollars are there to simply give away to anyone who asks - especially to big business.

What happened to responsibility in the business sector of our country? When did it become acceptable for failed executives to earn bonuses for bad performance? Furthermore, when did the government get in the business of bailing out every industry that holds out its hand?

Those are all very good questions that won't see a true investigation by the mainstream media. Sure, the members of Congress will bloviate about the need for change and they'll get their 30 seconds on the evening news, but in the end, it all comes down one simple fact: our country's leaders, including our new president, are so interlaced with special interests that we won't see change soon.

Sadly, I'm beginning to see that Obama isn't creating any change to believe in.

For the time being, I'll go back to working hard and paying my taxes and, like the upstanding citizen I try to be, I'll mail my check off tomorrow so it can be redistributed to all the corporate executives living in poverty.

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