



Forbes Calls for Defunding the IRS; A Better Solution Exists

Another of the many scandals coming out of Washington deals with [heavy abuse of power by the IRS](#). In years gone by, IRS threats against American citizens were employed by Presidents Franklin Roosevelt, Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon. Steve Forbes states in *Forbes* magazine that the previous illegal use of the IRS to target political enemies amounted to small potatoes compared to what has occurred since 2010. The Editor-in-Chief of the magazine that bears his name says that the Obama administration has used the tax-collecting agency to wage a mini-war against “ordinary citizens who have spontaneously come together in countless organizations to fight the current administration’s egregious policies and threats to liberty.” He’s absolutely correct.



As a result, Forbes calls for defunding of the IRS with the only reason for its continued existence being “a handful of clerks to process refunds.” He doesn’t say what government agency would be left to collect legitimate “taxes, duties, imposts and excises” as noted in Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution. Obviously, there has to be a collector of properly levied taxation.

[But Forbes is certainly correct in pointing to illegitimate power possessed by the IRS.](#) Over many years, countless Americans have refused to be involved in organizations — or even to speak out as an individual — to oppose harmful government programs and policies. Many Americans won’t openly admit their fear of being audited by IRS snoops should they speak out or send donations to groups the administration doesn’t like. But doing so should be an unquestioned right of anyone. This effect of the IRS is why this agency’s overriding power is more useful for the federal government as a “people controller” than as a revenue collector. In other words, the IRS has all but cancelled for many the First Amendment’s guarantee that raising one’s voice or financing some group is a God-given right. No law has been passed to abrogate everyone’s right to oppose government programs and policies. But none is needed so long as a threat from the IRS continues to hover over anyone who might otherwise be involved in opposing a multiplicity of government’s outrageous activities.

Yes, the IRS is government’s hammer to be used against virtually anyone or any group. A reining in of this power is absolutely necessary. Let us suggest, however, that the best way to accomplish this goal is [repeal of the 16th \(income tax\) Amendment](#). Then, no American could be cowed into silence because of fear of being audited. Then, many more Americans would be willing to fight against their own government’s many threats to liberty.

Steve Forbes is right to point to IRS abuses. But there’s a better way of removing its power. If more



Written by [John F. McManus](#) on July 16, 2014

Americans could be made aware that canceling unconstitutional federal agencies would result in paring down the government to 20 percent its size and 20 percent its cost, then the 16th Amendment could be repealed and America would again be the land of the free.

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