

## Former IRS Commissioner Wanted Income Tax Abolished

"...We're confiscating property now....That's socialism. It's written into the Communist Manifesto. Maybe we ought to see that every person who gets a tax return receives a copy of the Communist Manifesto with it so he can see what's happening to him." ---T. Coleman Andrews, IRS Commissioner, May 25, 1956

Posted: March 26, 2003

House of Representatives  
41st Congress - 1871  
3d Session  
Misc. Doc. No 51

### INCOME TAX

Letter from the  
Commissioner of Internal Revenue

Addressed to

Hon. Samuel Hooper, Chairman Committee of Ways and Means.

Relative to the Income Tax

January 26, 1871 - Referred to the Committee of Ways and Means and ordered to be printed.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,  
OFFICE OF INTERNAL REVENUE  
January 20, 1871.

SIR: In view of the very general discussion by the public at large of the income tax, and of the introduction in Congress of several measures looking to its repeal, and presuming that the formal consideration of the subject may shortly arise in your honorable committee, I deem it not improper briefly to express to the committee, through you, the conclusions which I have myself reached.

I regard the tax as the one of all others most obnoxious to the genius of our people, being inquisitorial in its nature, and dragging into public view an exposition of the most private pecuniary affairs of the citizen.

Such an unwilling exposition can only be compulsorily effected through a maintenance of the most expensive machinery; and both the nature of the tax and the means necessarily employed for its enforcement appear to be regarded by the better class of citizens with more and more disfavor from year to year.

It is furthermore most difficult of exact statement, especially in large business ramifications and where long periods of time are involved in extended commercial affairs.

There is some question as to its constitutionality, but as to that I express no opinion.

The amount derived from that source has, under the legislation already had, been greatly diminished; and I am so well satisfied that the evils more than counterbalance the benefits derived from its longer retention, that I recommend its unconditional repeal.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

A. Pleasonton, Commissioner

Hon. Samuel Hooper, Chairman  
Committee of Ways and Means

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### **California/New York Wanted Income Tax Abolished**

SENATE

Resolution of the Legislature of California  
41st Congress, 2d Session  
Misc. Doc. No. 104  
Obtained at the State Archives

Resolution of the  
Legislature of California  
in Favor of  
The abolition of the income tax.

April 1, 1870 - Ordered to lie on the table and be printed

STATE OF CALIFORNIA, Department of State, I H.L. Nichols, secretary of the State of California, do hereby certify that the annexed is a true, full, and correct copy of senate concurrent resolution No 39, passed at the 18th session of the legislature of said State, now on file in my office.

Witness my hand and the great seal of State, at office, in Sacramento, California, the 22d day of March, A.D. 1870.

(Seal)

H.L. Nichols  
Secretary of State.  
By Lew B. Harris, Deputy

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### **Concurrent Resolution.**

Resolved by the senate, (the assembly concurring), That our senators in Congress be instructed, and our representatives requested, to use their influence to procure, if possible, the abolition of the income tax.

Resolved, That his excellency the governor of this State be requested to forward a copy of this resolution to each of our senators and representatives in Congress.

E.J. Lewis  
President of the Senate pro tem.

Geo. H. Rogers,  
Speaker of the Assembly.

Approved March 18, 1870:

H.H. Haight  
Governor

Endorsed: Senate concurrent resolution No 39, adopted by the senate March 9, A.D. 1870

JOS. Roberts, Jr.  
Secretary of the Senate.

Concurred in by the assembly, March 14, A.D. 1870,

Josh Moffitt  
Ass't Clerk of the Assembly

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House of Representatives  
42d Congress, 1st Session  
Misc. Doc. No 4

### **INCOME TAX**

Resolution  
of  
The Legislature of New York,  
  
Relative to  
  
The repeal of the income tax.

March 13, 1871 - Referred to the Committee of Ways and Means and ordered to be printed.

State of New York

IN SENATE, Albany, February 28, 1871.

Resolved, (if the assembly concur,) That the Senators and Representatives in Congress from this State be respectfully requested to use every exertion, before the adjournment of the present Congress, to repeal the income tax.

Resolved, (if the assembly concur,) That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to our Representatives in Congress.

By order:

Hiram Calkins, Clerk

IN ASSEMBLY, February 28, 1871.  
The foregoing resolutions were duly concurred in.

By order:

C.W. Armstrong, Clerk

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Source: These three documents were obtained at the State Library, Sacramento, CA., by Devvy Kidd.

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