The Global Taxman

One small step at a time, advocates of global government are pushing schemes for global taxation as part of the plan to mold the United Nations into a world government.

So you think you pay enough taxes? That your crippling tax liabilities to local, state, and federal government can't possibly get any higher? That the voracious appetite of Leviathan can't possibly defy political gravity any more? That liberal tax-and-spend policies have finally been discredited? Guess again. There's a new frontier of creative taxation these days that has big government hucksters in a lather of anticipation: international taxation. From taxes on international currency transactions to taxes on carbon emissions and e-mails, global taxation schemes are all the rage in the halls of the UN and the various think-tanks that advise them.

Global taxation isn't an entirely new idea; vague proposals have been floated by internationalist utopians since the late 19th century. Unlike other aspects of the drive to a new world order, however, global taxation has been a back-burner issue, at least until quite recently.

The Tobin Tax

The first and most concrete proposal for worldwide taxation was advanced by Yale economist James Tobin in the 1970s. Decrying the destabilizing effects of "excessive international … mobility of private financial capital," Tobin proposed a uniform worldwide levy on international currency exchanges. Dubbed the "Tobin tax," it was intended to "throw some sand in the wheels of our excessively efficient international money markets" and to pave the way for an eventual "common currency, common monetary and fiscal policy, and economic integration." Although its proponents can't quite agree on how such a tax might be implemented, the proposal has continued to attract admiring attention from the internationalist set, especially since the financial crises in Mexico, Asia, Brazil, and Russia in the 1990s.

Currency instability has bedeviled international commerce since the abandonment of the international gold standard and the adoption of floating exchange rates. In the context of a global system of fiat currencies, currency "speculation" is the free market's way of penalizing central banks that inflate too irresponsibly — that is, create too much money out of thin air. As Tobin lamented, "The stimulus of expansionary monetary policy to domestic demand is limited by the competition of foreign interest rates for mobile funds." Because private, free-market currency trading provides a check on the near-absolute power of central bankers, it has been targeted for heavy taxation by the globalist cartel. "The Tobin tax can be seen as a form of sin tax — the sin being currency market speculation," remarked Tobin proponent Thomas Palley, assistant director of policy for the AFL-CIO.

People bright enough to profit from activities as arcane as international currency speculation might find ways to avoid a Tobin tax. They might, for instance, invent entirely new financial instruments. Such possibilities worry would-be global tax inquisitors. To remedy this, Palley envisions an endless regime of regulatory innovation to stay abreast of the international currency market:

> Over time, the financial markets will undoubtedly innovate in directions that evade a Tobin tax.… But this does not invalidate the Tobin tax. Instead, it affirms the fact that regulation is an on-going process — a dynamic game played between regulators and the regulated — that needs to be continually updated. Sometimes regulators manage to get ahead of the game, and other times they just manage to stay even. However, there is never an excuse for capitulating and surrendering the public interest to the dictates of the market.

But how could such a tax scheme be implemented? If it were done unilaterally by countries like the United States, to set the example for everyone else, currency trading would simply shift to those countries free of the tax. Nevertheless, Dean Baker of the Center for Economic and Policy Research has proposed that the United States take the lead in self-imposing the Tobin tax in some form: "As a result of its unmatched economic and military power, [the United States] can usually force the rest of the world to accommodate its concerns. If the United States sought to use its power in international forums to promote a speculation tax, it is likely that it could succeed."

In his original proposal, Tobin suggested that the role of tax collector be played by either the IMF or the World Bank. Modern versions of the plan call for the creation of an entirely new tax collection bureaucracy. In either case, the final beneficiary will be the embryonic UN-centered world government.

Target: Your Wallet

For most of us international currency exchanges are not a daily concern; punishing the George Soroses of the world might seem long overdue. But the globalists have no intention of confining taxation to a few super-rich international financiers. Since Tobin’s proposal, the move to find global sources of tax revenue has gained considerable momentum, and the focus has shifted to the more mundane activities of the middle classes.

The radical environmental movement has recently thrown its weight behind various global taxation schemes. The so-called carbon tax is a prominent example. Exploiting concerns over global warming, the carbon tax would punish alleged contributors to global warming by increasing the price of fossil fuels proportionate to their carbon content. The aim of such a tax would not only be to raise revenues for globalist projects, but also to coerce industrialized nations to knuckle under to the megalomaniacal objectives of the radical environmental lobby. Reflecting on the unlimited possibilities of such a tax, Richard R. Cooper, Harvard professor of international Economics, writing in a recent issue of *Foreign Affairs*, enthused:

> The tax would boost general conservation of fossil fuels.… [Economic] growth can be encouraged by reducing other taxes, like those on foreign trade and earnings. Taxes on fossil fuel would of course have some undesirable effects, such as delaying the switch from firewood to fossil fuels in poor countries. But it would be impractical in most cases to tax firewood. In principle, it would be possible to extend the idea of a common carbon tax to methane as well, covering wetland rice production, decomposable refuse, gas pipeline losses, and cattle raising. That more difficult step could be phased in later.

In other words, no level of taxation on human activity will satisfy those who regard the human race as a blemish on the surface of Mother Earth. And of course, Cooper recommends that "the international community" — embodied in the UN — be the recipient of any such environmental taxation proceeds.

Also attracting a lot of attention, for the same reasons as the carbon tax, is a proposed tax on aviation fuel, to penalize jet planes for their emission of supposedly harmful carbon dioxide. Both carbon and aviation fuel taxes are transparently motivated by pseudoscientific solicitude for the global environment, and are attempts to achieve via taxation some of the major aims of the Kyoto Treaty on global warming.

Nor will the global taxation bandwagon stop with specialized imposts on currency traders and environmental polluters. Still more recent proposals contemplate taxing international internet activity, especially overseas e-mails. Once taxes such as these are enacted, can a global income tax be far behind?

The Great Deception

An astonishingly candid article by Kevin Baumert of the UN-affiliated Global Policy Forum outlines the deceptive strategies used by proponents of global taxation:

> The process of implementing global levies will necessarily be slow and incremental. Thus it is important to take these small, incremental steps now, so that larger ones are possible in the future. "Starting small" means that tax proposals can begin with small percentages, levied at the local or state level. Increasing the boldness and scale of the tax are secondary steps.… Low rates are less politically daunting.… Deciding on tax rates will be an iterated process, and as scientific and economic understanding increases, tax rates can be adjusted. The first challenge is to get the tax implemented.

Pointing out that "state- and national-level initiatives" face less formidable obstacles than their global counterparts, Baumert recommends that precedents for measures like the carbon tax be set at the local level. Citing examples of carbon-tax proposals in Minnesota and various European nations, he encourages activists to push for what will be "necessary intermediate steps that can set important examples."

Baumert also recommends deliberately misleading rhetoric in the propaganda campaign on behalf of global taxation:

> The very word "tax" is loaded with negative connotations and is often synonymous with political death. For this reason, couching proposals in terms of a fee, levy, or charge will be decidedly more palatable to policymakers. A "charge" or "user fee" in fact makes more sense in the context of placing restrictions on the use of global commons (like air, sea, electronic frequencies, spaces in orbit, etc.) because it is the opposite of "free," the current cost.

If you thought the air you breathe is free, think again. As Baumert makes clear, the globalist cartel hopes to tax every conceivable human activity since, by definition, the "global commons" belongs to and must be administered by them.

By slow, incremental steps — the "patient gradualism" of which the architects of world order are so fond — we are to be shackled to a regime of heavy, arbitrarily defined international taxation, for which the sky is literally no limit. By exploiting radical initiatives at local levels and using carefully coordinated talking points and weasel words, globalists intend to foist upon us a brave new world of tax-and-spend on a scale that will make us yearn for the good ol' days of the IRS.