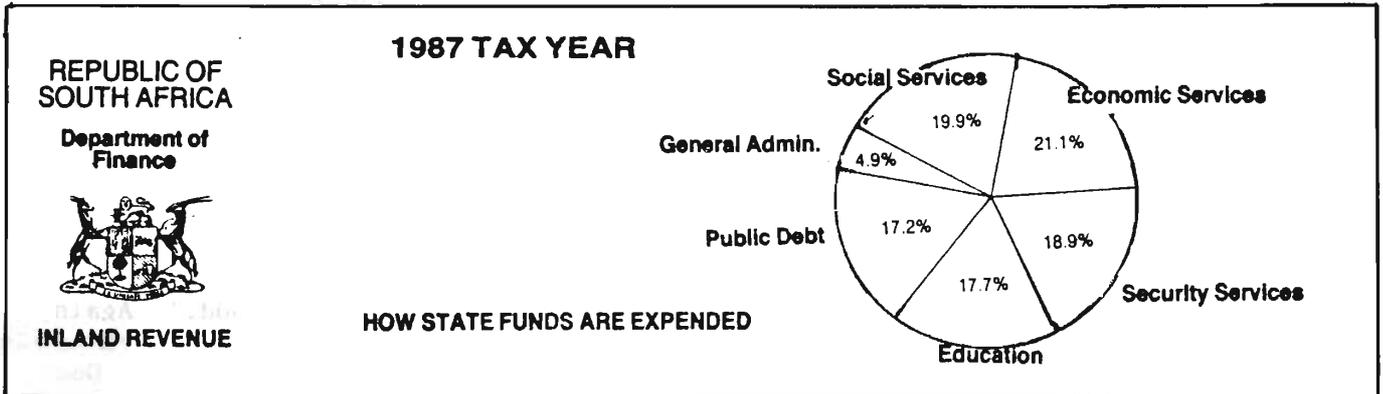


APARTHEID AND TAXATION

PACSA FACTSHEET

"Taxation is not the purely technical subject most people believe it is. It is very much more a tool used by the privileged few with the necessary political clout to redistribute wealth in their favour at the expense of their victims." (Mr. Costa Divaris).

Voteless people have no say in the parliament which levies taxes and decides on expenditure. Black people do not enjoy the same benefits as whites, but pay the same taxes.



Some of the Items we Pay for:

- * Education (R2746 per white child; R387 per black child, 1985-86).
- * Pensions (R 198 p.m. per white pensioner; R97 per month per black, 1986-87).
- * Aid for 'independent' homelands.
- * Aid for white landowners.
- * Salaries for tricameral parliamentarians.
- * Salaries for civil servants and cost of multiple departments (Health, Education, etc.)
- * Security and Military activities.
- * Prisons (average daily population 114,220, Dec. 1986 at just under R11 per prisoner. (Hansard 23.2.1987)

Implementation of Taxation

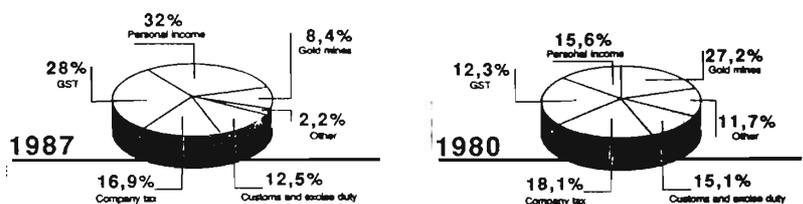
We pay Income Tax through the enforcement of the Pay-as-you-Earn system and also General Sales Tax. Revenue also comes from: Company Tax, Provisional Tax, Licences, Duties, Tolls, Rates, Customs, Petrol. Married women are taxed together with their husbands and so pay more tax.

What proportion of taxes do individuals pay?

In seven years, the tax burden on individuals has doubled; income from the mines is down to less than a third.
Source: Econometrix

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Taxes compared: 1987 and 1980



Penalties for not paying taxes

The taxpayer is at first penalised by having interest added onto the amount owing. If this is not paid, his/her possessions are sold and the amount owing for tax is deducted. No opportunity is given to state reasons if one should wish to withhold a portion of one's tax. Finally, one's estate is sequestrated and one can be imprisoned.

An Alternative Budget

If this were a just society, more money would go into such needs as: health-care (especially primary health-care in rural areas), childcare, education, housing, pensions, food subsidies, unemployment assistance and so on.

As Mercabank - a merchant bank in the Sanlam group - itself says: "Events have increasingly diverted sources from productive uses such as infrastructure creation and investment in human capital such as education, towards unproductive expenditure on defence and police actions." (WEEKLY MAIL, May 22-28, 1987).

Tax Resistance in Other Countries

"Tax resistance campaigns seem to develop from the direct action of several individuals who then join together to form a mutual support group. Direct action campaigns exist in France, the Netherlands, Germany, Japan, Italy and Switzerland. Campaigns in U.K. and U.S.A. and Canada combine both direct action and action for legislative change. Individuals are active in Australia and Belgium." (PAYING FOR PEACE, Quakers Council for European Affairs). Direct Action usually focusses on separation of war tax from the remainder.

What Does the Bible say about taxes?

Matt. 17:24-27: Jesus pays temple tax but makes it clear that he is not bound to do so - 'the sons are exempt.' It is a matter of conscience, and in this case Jesus feels it is better to pay than to give offence. It is not a tax to the State.

Mark 12:13-17: Jesus is questioned on paying tax to Caesar (poll tax) and he replies, 'Give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar - and to God what belongs to God.' Again, it is a matter of conscience, to be weighed up in each circumstance, informed by love of God and love of neighbour. Jesus points beyond the rights of Caesar to the rights of God.

Luke 12 v.2: One of the charges brought against Jesus at his trial is that he is "subverting our nation. He opposes payment of taxes to Caesar." We know that he converted tax collectors - Matthew and Zacchaeus - and was condemned by the Romans to die as Zealots die, i.e. crucifixion. (Zealots refused to pay poll tax).

Romans 13:6-7: Paul makes it clear that we are to pay the authorities their dues. But Paul also speaks of love of neighbour and 'love being the fulfilment of the law' (Rom.13:10). In Rom. 12.2 Christians are called on not to be conformed to worldly evil and to decide which laws are compatible with love.

Cosatu's Call

The 710 000-strong Congress of Trade Unions is using a slogan for its Living Wage Campaign: NO TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION - a phrase coined over two centuries ago as a basis of the American War of Independence. One of the demands of COSATU is that PAYE should not be deducted from workers' wages until all workers and their families earn enough to meet their basic monthly living commitments.

What can we do?

1. Call upon the government to use revenue justly rather than to subsidise the apartheid infrastructure with its inbuilt injustices.
2. Pay less tax and give the money saved to those who are deprived of basic necessities.

Some ideas for paying less tax.

Live more simply - Share commodities/equipment to reduce consumerism - Buy tax-free basic foods - Support the informal sector - Have wages paid partly in kind - Avoid toll roads - Provide home entertainment/share video viewing - Share transport - Exchange garden produce for dressmaking or seedlings for jam or whatever!! Think up your own ideas!!

(See also previous factsheets, e.g. No. 11 Simple Lifestyle).