

The State Comptroller says that in 10 years Texas is going to have income taxes. Overhead down at the capital, according to him, has gone up mightily fierce. Land taxes and other overrides aren't staying up with the worthies' ideas on spending money. Twenty-seven states, he said, are already collecting income taxes.

No response has come from the cow people to the tax program. Calves, you know, went down again last week. Income taxes, state or federal, are about as much threat to the cow people as swamp gnats are to the high plains.

I have observed that man's instinct to collect taxes are as strong as his instinct to avoid taxes. One of my friends works at the Tax Assessor's office in Mertzson. Every weekend, Child Who Sits in the Sun and she stage a raid on Angelo's discount houses that'd make the buccaneering days on Spanish Main look like a rerun of the Saturday morning cartoons on television. Yet, on Mondays, she'd double tax her grandma's locket if the old lady were to fail to read the backside of her tax rendition.

I was up at the office the other day transferring a title on a secondhand pickup that belonged to one of my sons. To avoid paying the insurance company kids, we were changing the title to an increased rate against my account.

The tax, she said, on a gift pickup was \$12. The sales tax on a \$50 pickup was something close to \$2. She knew full well that I couldn't transact fifty bucks worth of business with one of my sons. Also, she knew that adding \$12 worth of expense to that pickup was exactly like setting fire to your bankroll with a torch made from credit cards.

First, I told her that I wasn't about to lie for a measly \$10 bill. After I saw she was going to go on and charge the gift tax, I added that I wasn't going to lie unless she let the nitpicking title tax stand in the way of our friendship.

She didn't get even stop writing. A lot of good \$10 will do for the state government. Freshmen representatives so naive they think the floor's spittoons are bill hoppers can spend that many dollars a second without ever being recognized by the speaker.

I was plenty sore. I don't know why Mertzson can't have the kind of public officials that receive all the publicity for helping their friends.

The confounded Washington Post and other busybody newspapers cause all the trouble. Citizens in November are going to vote on three questions: (1) Was the candidate involved in Watergate?; (2) Did he know Miss Elizabeth Ray?; and (3) Has he ever seen anyone in his office that worked for Gulf Oil Company?

Other qualifications are going to be ignored. An hombre advocating the justice of Bluebeard the Pirate, handicapped by an I.Q. of minus 13, can slip by unnoticed. The man who ought to rule the country should be the hombre who can explain when newspapermen became such pious individuals.

I just want government to be fair. Every man and every case should be tried on the merits. It's one thing for a good old boy on a Texas ranch to hide a little cash from the I.R.S. versus, say, some bigshot New York shoemaker out-and-out hiding money to cheat the government.

Be fair. You know and I know that lawyers aren't supposed to squeal on other lawyers. And doctors . . . and healer that exposes one of his colleagues should be sentenced to wearing a rusty stethoscope for the rest of his life.

I am not going to forget that \$10 heist she pulled off. Next time she calls to borrow lemons or flour, I'm going to say all right, Mrs. Smarty, just go and borrow your stuff down there from your chums at the state capital.

We sure do live in a cold world. I long for the good old days when men were honest and fair.