

Essay:

Taxation without representation is one of the base concepts upon which our country was built. If they want to tax “sins” fine, I would only suggest that they do so fairly and, more importantly, proportionally tax industries based upon their impact upon our society as a whole. Perhaps this should be the foundation of the next revolution.

Our government calls its recent approach towards selected industries, “sin taxes”. These politicians have unfairly targeted the tobacco and other industries to fund their agendas. As they conveniently forget the role tobacco played in building our country, they should remember that tobacco is no more a “sin” than so many other products marketed to the public today. Particularly egregious examples of excluded “sins” are the sugar-rich foods and fat-filled products pushed on our children today. Talk about “sins”! Obesity. High blood pressure. Heart disease. Diabetes. Certain types of cancers. A literal smorgasbord of diseases. At least tobacco is only offered to adults who can make an informed decision while we find colas and fatty snack machines in literally every elementary school in our Country. If we are going to tax our “sins”, then let’s tax them all in a manner proportional to their effect.

Like it or not, we are likely to soon have a federally imposed, universal health care system with costs typical of any undertaking of the government. With the commitment towards this goal comes the associated big question; how do we pay for it? So far, the tobacco industry has been its favorite target. If they are going to tax our “sins” to pay for their agenda, then let’s tax all of the “sins” of our modern society proportionally. Those industries based upon sugars, fat rich foods, and the garbage which they offer today (just read the ingredients of a “Twinky” or a typical cola product and you will know what I mean). Those companies make the impact of the tobacco industry look like an afterthought. The impact of these products on public health far outweigh those of tobacco in breadth and scope. Despite this, no one calls upon them to be taxed in a manner proportional with their societal impact.

If they want to tax our “sins”, then tax them all. Otherwise, they should find the money needed to fund their societal reforms from all of those who contribute to our societal “sins”. Anything else offends the very principal upon which our country was founded.