

The day the Earth stood still

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In the sci-fi classic, aliens become alarmed when Earthlings develop rockets and nuclear weapons. They send an ultimatum: abandon war or face annihilation. Their emissary, Klaatu, demonstrates their might by temporarily shutting down all power. Machines stop, traffic halts, frightened people wander the streets. When he restores power, Klaatu is killed. He couldn't save Earthlings from themselves.

Radical Republicans have another way to make the Earth stand still: abolish the IRS and replace income taxes with what they deceptively call a "23%" sales tax on the "gross payment." Wall Street Journal (WSJ) says it's really 30% because a \$100 item would cost \$130.

Replacing graduated income taxes with a flat 30% sales tax hurts working Americans and helps billionaires. And, when everything costs an extra 30%, sales plummet, people get laid off, the economy grinds to a halt: the Earth stands still.

Grover Norquist, head of Americans for Tax Reform, who famously said he wanted to shrink government to the size where he could "drown it in the bathtub," called the scheme "a political gift to Biden and the Democrats." WSJ agrees, calling it "masochism."

That's because, as economics professor Howard Chernick says, it would be devastating: "You'd see people in the streets, they would be the recipients of Social Security and Medicare. They would be immediately headed toward soup kitchens and starvation."

Sci-fi writer L. Ron Hubbard ("Battlefield Earth") created the Church of Scientology. It teaches that Xenu, extraterrestrial ruler of a "Galactic Confederacy," came to Earth 75 million years ago, stacked people around volcanoes, and killed them with hydrogen bombs to free their spirits ("thetans"). When the IRS ruled Scientology wasn't a real church and denied its income tax exemption, Hubbard concocted the 30% sales-tax scheme Republicans have embraced.

On Earth's legislative battlefield, Democrats will vaporize Republicans' Tax Plan from outer space, saving us from Republicans and Republicans from themselves.

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