

Nixon's and Ford's Taxes Compared



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A CONFIDENTIAL audit of Vice President Gerald Ford's taxes proves that not all politicians are tax cheats.

Both the Internal Revenue Service and the Joint Congressional Taxation Committee, which investigated President Nixon's taxes, also audited Ford's returns before he was confirmed as Vice President.

The President is now stuck with a bill for \$476,431 in back taxes after the IRS disallowed several dubious deductions. The Vice President, in contrast, merely had to make a few minor adjustments.

The confidential Ford audit, which we have obtained, portrays an inherently honest man who believes he should bear his fair share of the tax burden.

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FORD'S RETURNS show a total income of \$224,364.10 for the first three years of the 1970s. He paid \$75,111.44, or about a third of his income, in federal taxes. An additional \$6261.42 was paid to Michigan in state taxes.

Over the same three-year period, President Nixon reported a total income of \$794,104.85 yet paid only \$5969.01 in federal taxes. This was less than one percent of his income. He paid absolutely nothing in state taxes.

Tax agents carefully investigated two accounts which Ford used to pay political bills. Declares the confidential audit: "Numerous items were considered to be taxable before receiving Mr. Ford's diary and the fact that we were unable to trace trips to certain locations at certain times of the

year . . . After receiving the diaries . . . all of the plane travel tickets and cash advances were accepted as legitimate political expenditures."

This compares to the \$27,015 that the joint committee claimed President Nixon owes the government for travel expenses he couldn't justify.

The IRS disallowed an \$871.44 deduction that Ford took for special clothing he had purchased for the 1972 Republican convention. The joint committee had found this to be a legitimate deduction. But the IRS ruled the suits were not "unique or distinctive" in character and, therefore, leveled a "tax deficiency" of \$435.77 against Ford.

Although he was advised he could challenge this, he insisted upon giving the government the benefit of any doubt and ordered his accountant to write the IRS a check.

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THE TAX AGENTS also found that Ford had "overlooked" \$1167 which was billed to his political account but actually had been spent for a family trip to their condominium in the Vail, Colo., ski country. Ford thought he had reimbursed the political account, but immediately ordered the necessary payment when he learned otherwise.

"The analysis of the diaries resulted in several questions . . ." states the audit. "In all cases, the items were found to be correct." The Vice President, in other words, kept scrupulously honest tax records.