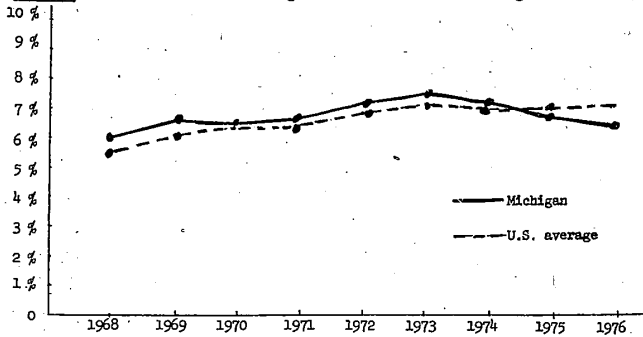


FIGURE 3. State Taxes* as a Percentage of Personal Income in Michigan and the U.S.



* also includes sales taxes, permits, driver's licenses, park fees, etc.

Headlee figures branded a 'lie'

The Headlee theme that "the growth of government is out of control" is being branded a distortion and lie by a Saginaw Valley State College instructor.

Sociology instructor Robert J. Thaler cites six points in Headlee's standard presentation in support of Proposal E on tax limitation.

The gist of his argument is that taxes haven't increased by the percentages Farmington Hills insurance executive Richard Headlee says they have increased.

"Headlee and his supporters are shouting this slogan long and loud from one end of the state to the other, hoping that most people will start to believe it because they have heard it so much," said Thaler in a paper circulated statewide.

He gave these examples:

1. "IN JUST 10 years," claims Headlee, "state and local taxes have increased twice as fast as the people's ability to pay (their personal income)."

Said Thaler: "What they label as 'state and local taxes' is actually the line for total state spending. But only about 50 per cent of state revenues spent come from state and local taxes."

"The rest comes from increased federal programs and revenue sharing, permits, licenses, college tuition, park fees, hospitals state liquor stores, etc., for which who choose to pay receive specific services they want."

2. HEADLEE compares "personal income" based on individuals with "total state and local taxes" paid by both individuals and corporations.

Said Thaler: "These are familiar deceptions. Change the subject and hope that most people won't notice, like in the old shell game."

3. HEADLEE CLAIMS the state's personal income tax has gone up 740 per cent in 10 years.

Thaler calls this "preposterous," adding, "Every citizen knows better. Headlee is looking at figures for the first year the state income tax was in effect, when it was collected for only a fraction of a year—October-December 1967!"

"No wonder the increase looks so huge. That fact alone wipes out most of his 740 per cent claim."

"Inflation and some moderate increases in the overall tax rate, from 2.6 per cent to 4.6 per cent, account for the rest. Headlee's ideology has made him—and others—blind to the facts. Their minds were made up even before they looked at the data."

"In truth, total state and local taxes have gone up at just about the same rate as personal income."

4. STATE EMPLOYEES are compared, in Headlee's charts, with total state population. Thaler calls it "misleading and irrelevant."

He explained: "Population has increased about 500,000 persons; state employees, about 20,000 persons."

Thaler said the diversity and changing composition of the state's population are more important. For example, the number of working adults has increased 20 per cent. "And as a percentage of all employees, the number of state employees has only increased from 1.25 per cent to 1.51 per cent of the total."

5. HEADLEE DOESN'T consider the areas where state employment has risen, and why, Thaler charged.

"It is hardly the state's fault. State park and campground use is up 30 per cent since 1968. Vocational rehabilitation cases are up over 100 per cent."

"Adult basic education, for illiterate adults, is up 600 per cent. State college enrollments are up 60 per cent."

"Prison inmates increased 100 per cent. The numbers of food stamp recipients and families on ADC have increased over 400 per cent."

"Numbers of court cases have increased 100 per cent in every court."

"Total population hasn't increased much, but the types of people who make up our population have changed. Today we have a much greater crime problem, especially drugs and organized crime. Only the state can adequately deal with problems of this magnitude."

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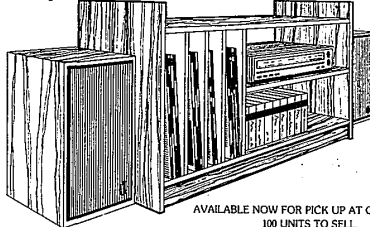
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