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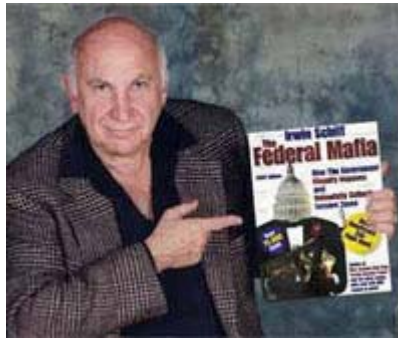


THE POWER TO DESTROY
Tax crusader Irwin Schiff found guilty on all counts
Faces possible 43 years in prison, \$3.25 million in fines for evasion

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Irwin Schiff, the Nevada man who has made a career out of telling Americans that payment of federal income taxes is voluntary instead of mandatory, was convicted on all 13 counts by a federal jury in Las Vegas yesterday.



Irwin Schiff seen promoting his book, 'The Federal Mafia: How the Government Illegally Imposes and Unlawfully Collects Income Taxes'

Among the charges he faced was income tax evasion and of filing false tax returns for the years 1997 through 2002.

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"People who evade their tax obligations, or encourage or enable others to do so, are cheating all law-abiding taxpayers," said Eileen O'Connor, assistant attorney general for the Justice Department's Tax Division.

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This marks the third time Schiff, who served as his own attorney during the five-week trial, has been convicted of tax-related offenses.

"Paying taxes is the price of citizenship. After three strikes, I would hope that even Schiff realizes that he has struck out," said [Internal Revenue Service](#) Commissioner Mark Everson.

Schiff, 77, faces a maximum sentence of 43 years in prison and \$3.25 million in fines, and was ordered held without bail until his sentencing Jan. 20.

His co-defendant, Cynthia Neun, 52, faces up to 50 years and \$3.3 million in fines for her conviction on 15 of 16 counts, including conspiracy, tax evasion, aiding in the filing of fraudulent tax returns.

Another co-defendant, Lawrence Cohen, 65, was found guilty of one count of aiding in the filing of fraudulent tax returns and acquitted on three other counts of the same charge, and of conspiracy.

For years, Schiff has been holding seminars and selling books such as "The Federal Mafia: How the Government Illegally Imposes and Unlawfully Collects Income Taxes" and "The Great Income Tax Hoax: Why You Can Immediately Stop Paying This Illegally Enforced Tax."

He believes the federal tax code doesn't require U.S. citizens to pay income tax, and contends the IRS has no legal authority to seize property.

In June of this year, as [WorldNetDaily](#) reported, a former IRS agent who believes citizens are not required to pay federal income taxes was acquitted on charges he attempted to defraud the government.

Joseph Banister, a certified public accountant in San Jose, Calif., had been telling his clients they don't need to file federal income tax returns because the 16th Amendment, which gives Congress "power to lay and collect taxes on incomes," was never properly ratified.



Joseph Banister

A jury in the U.S. District Court in Sacramento found him not guilty on a charge of conspiracy to defraud the government and on all three counts of aiding and assisting the filing of false tax returns for a client.



Banister's attorney, Robert Bernhoft, told WorldNetDaily the result has no direct bearing on the legitimacy of the 16th Amendment, but he insisted the implications are bigger than the issue of taxes.

"The outcome shows that average, law-abiding, hard-working citizens are not going to criminalize speech – they're not going to send a man to prison for asking the federal government serious questions about a serious subject," he said.

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