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Reverting to type? [1]

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It's not taken long for President Sarkozy to resort to the age old practice of taxing the hardworking of France. His latest initiative, part of his "policy of civilisation", is to tax the revenues of the private broadcasting channels' advertising streams as well as revenues generated by internet access and mobile phone technology. This would allow the two public broadcasting channels to rid themselves of advertising and also free up the £598 million they previously earned in this way.

Frankly, it is about time all politicians set free "public broadcasting" and let it pay for itself. For it to be truly free and publicly owned it should take on the form of a non-profit organization funded by the donations of the watching public. Its funding revenues could be sourced in a similar vein to that thin slice of money raised from telethons or pledge drives that the American PBS channel utilises as a top up to its own government funding. Or, as the earnings of the French channels show, they could take advertising to pay for themselves. Whether a channel has advertising or not is increasingly irrelevant in the modern times of choice. It's the content that counts. And channels that provide poor content only have themselves to blame when the viewers switch over.

Mr Sarkozy is merely attempting to dress up a tax hike on the whole of France. It should be economically obvious that the tax rises, "no matter how infinitesimal", are passed down the financial chain to the consumers through higher charges. It may seem to the French President that he only taxing that most hated of entities in France, the private company, but in reality he is taxing the man on street. Could it be that Mr Sarkozy is the same as every other French President? Both publicly and privately...

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