

PRICE TAG OF THE
American Dream
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PROGRAM TREATMENT

Do you know how much you paid in taxes last year? Do you know where that tax money goes? Do you know whether you should vote for a property tax cap? What impact would an increase in the sales tax have? Most of don't know the answers to any of these questions.

What we need is information—not the minute detail, but a true sense of perspective

With the help of several Maine production, economic, political & historical experts, I'm beginning production on a documentary television program to tell the story of taxes in broad dramatic brush-strokes. We've titled it, "Price-tag of the American Dream."

We'll re-create debates. We'll read from the writings of governors, presidents and legislators. We'll watch our taxes take shape piece-by-piece through interviews with well-known political leaders, historians, economists, and tax experts. And we'll uncover many stories of "just plain folk," whom taxes were instituted to help.

We will also document the principal concerns we face today—

- Where does the money go?
- Progressive vs. regressive taxation
- Deficit spending and whether or not it helps our economy
- The rich, the poor, and the middle class tax bill
- Is our tax structure fair, adequate and efficient?

Our pilot production will be a two-part series on the State of Maine.

In our final chapter we will hold an "electronic town hall" and bring together several hundred Maine people—representatives from all walks of life—to answer three key questions:

- 1) What do we really want from our government?
- 2) How should we pay for it?
- 3) How should we handle Maine's current tax and spending needs?

Our program will document this exciting process. Strong characters will surface during the discussions and we will focus our cameras on these, but we will also watch for the impact of quietly spoken words, and subtly shifting opinions. We will learn how Maine people really feel about their government and how they feel it should be paid for.

The program will air on one or more Maine television stations and then distributed to Maine's High Schools, Colleges and Universities, as well as numerous civic groups, where it can motivate other informed deliberations.

It is not a simple story, nor will it lead to simple solutions. It will lead to a better-informed state and nation, and to people better able to think critically and responsibly about taxes.