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THE TAX LAWYER

TAXES | 6/15/2013

# IRS Tale of Two Cities, Cincinnati And DC

With all the IRS drama of the last month, I'll bet a true sage like Charles Dickens would have a calming effect. Our cast of characters is hardly Dickensian. Besides, it's not as though we're facing the French Revolution. Still, let's see:

### **It was the best of times**

(There's Star Trek, Dance Party, Gilligan and more)



### **It was the worst of times**

(No guillotine, but still not a bad time to take the Fifth)

### **It was the age of wisdom**

(That was then, this is now, says OMB's Danny Werfel)

### **It was the age of foolishness**

(TIGTA says teambuilding builds little, but it's free)

### **It was the epoch of belief**

(Hey, those Cincinnati employees sure went rogue)

**It was the epoch of incredulity**

(\$49M for IRS conferences?)

**It was the season of Light**

(Shulman recalls nothing, but wife Tweets to Occupy!)

**It was the season of Darkness**

(Oversight hearings are a drag, after all)

**It was the spring of hope**

(Danny Werfel does 1031 from OMB to IRS)

**It was the winter of despair**

(Werfel says the spigot is off the “culture of excess”)

**We had everything before us**

(FATCA makes its own gravy, they say)

**We had nothing before us**

(Congress goes Texas Chainsaw Massacre on IRS budget)

**We were all going direct to Heaven**

([John Doe summons](#) hurt *soooooo* good)

**We were all going direct the other way**

(What’s wrong with audit profiling anyhow?)

**In short, the period was so far like the present period (Nixon, IRS-Gate?), that some of its noisiest authorities (Glenn Beck, Rachel Maddow?) insisted on its being received, for good (Sen. Levin, Tim Cook?) or for evil (Sen. Levin, Tim Cook?), in the superlative (Joe Biden?) degree of comparison only.**

Surely once the IRS moves from another Acting Commissioner to an honest-to-goodness final Commissioner appointment (Taxpayer Advocate Nina Olson still looks good to me), let’s hope our new IRS Commissioner is as poised as [Sydney Carton](#):

**“Tis a far, far better tax I levy than I have ever levied before. ‘Tis a far, far better tax deal I sign than I have ever...Sorry, I’m being advised by my lawyer to take the Fifth.”**

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