

Has someone cooked your goose?

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“Goose” (ganso) you may know. The plural is “geese”. A roasted goose is a dish that British people have on special occasions such as Christmas.

Some mortals have eiderdowns (edredones) which are filled with goose feathers.

There are some idioms (modismos) that use “goose”. Contemplate these:

- Sometimes politicians “cook the goose that lays the golden egg” (matan la gallina de los huevos de oro). This is figurative and means that too much greed leads to losses, or that you should not exploit the people that provide benefits. An example.

Imagine a country where the top tax rate is 40%. Some politicians think that having a 60% income tax rate for people on high salaries will mean more money for the government. Wrong. Those people leave the country and go to lower tax places and the government gets no tax from those people (whereas before the government received 40%).

So a government’s greed leads to losses in tax income, so the “goose “ (a person with high income) has been “cooked” and no longer pays tax in the country. Clever person: stupid government.

- Sometimes a mortal “cooks somebody’s goose” (hace la pascua a alguien). This idiom means that somebody causes great problems and spoils or ruins somebody’s chances of doing something.

An example. Imagine that you are Mr. Pablo Casado (the PP leader, a political party in Spain) and you have plans to cut income tax to 15%.

You plan to announce it in 2 weeks. However, the information about it is leaked (...se filtra a...) to Mr. Sanchez, the PSOE party leader. Mr. Sanchez then decides to immediately announce something similar.

So, by the announcement, Mr. Sánchez “has cooked Mr. Casado’s goose” because he has ruined the opportunity for Mr. Casado to announce something new and interesting.

- Sometimes people go on a “wild goose chase” which refers to a pointless, and fruitless (inútil, infructuosa) activity or action. The origins of the phrase? Trying to catch a “wild goose” is very difficult and perhaps a waste of time. Shakespeare uses the phrase in Romeo and Juliet.

So perhaps you have cooked a goose, cooked someone’s goose, been on a wild goose chase, and have concluded that high taxes kill the goose that lays the golden egg. What do you opine?