

Socialism? Think again

The conservative fearmongers are at it again, this time with their rants about socialism. J.A. Schafer's letter ("Land of opportunity," March 29) is a recent, but unfortunately not the only, example. It would be nice if these people at least understood what socialism is before they ask us all to rise up against what our government is currently doing.

President Obama wants to increase taxes on the top earners back to the level they were during the 1990s, which is lower than they were during the early Ronald Reagan years. That's hardly socialistic. He also wants to create some regulations that would prevent commercial and investment banks from engaging in high-risk gambles that could undermine our national economy, as they recently did. That's hardly socialistic.

And he wants to spend the money necessary to get us out of the deep hole that the fearmongers created with their economic policies of the past eight years. But he is doing this while trying to maintain as much private ownership and control as possible. That's hardly socialistic. If the government were truly socialistic, the recent AIG bonuses would never have been paid out.

We already tried the fearmongers' approach. In the past eight years, we lowered regulations on banks and corporations. We gave the rich huge tax breaks and allowed obscene incomes to be earned. And what that produced was a drop in earnings for the average worker and an economy in shambles.

Schafer asks those of us who want a government that implements reasonable protections to go live in Sweden. I suggest that if the fearmongers want a weak government that stays out of the economy, has few regulations and fosters an "every man for himself" approach, they leave instead. Afghanistan has all the requirements they seek. I will chip in for the one-way tickets.

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