

Are the Republicans Anarchists?

We Respond to a Fund-Raising Email from Senator Elizabeth Warren

Anarcho-Syndicalist Review

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Elizabeth,

Thank you for your letter, but it is confusing. Do you really consider your Republican counterparts in the House of Representatives to be “anarchists”? What leads you to believe that?

According to you an anarchist believes government is not necessary and wants to get rid of it. Is this what the Republican Party truly believes? According to you government has three basic functions: national defense, putting rules in place that are “fair and transparent”, and building things that we all need but cannot provide for ourselves. How can anybody be against that?

Certainly the Republican Party is not opposed to “national defense.” During the previous Republican Administration they were so much in favor of national defense they felt the need to defend the streets of Baghdad from Al-Qaeda, even though there were no members of Al-Qaeda to be seen anywhere in Iraq. Of course, the members of your Party, the Democratic Party, were no slouches when it came to national defense and voted to give Bush and Cheney the authority to invade that country. Good for you, you Democrats.

As you point out the Republicans have always been in favor of funding for bombs, the military, and any old thing the Pentagon wants. During the latest round of government defunding, they made sure that the troops would still get paid. After all, we can’t expect them to be in Afghanistan, Gitmo or other parts of our country being shot at without getting paid for it. If they stopped getting paid, the soldiers might get it into their heads to go home to their families. Not to mention those “defense” contractors that can always count on getting paid. So does paying the military make the Republicans “anarchists”? Certainly not.

That brings us to rules, especially rules that are “fair and transparent.” As you told us during the last election, many of us ordinary citizens have come to suspect “the system is rigged.” I thought you were right about that one. The electoral system is rigged. The political system is rigged. Certainly the economic system is rigged, which is why so many of us are either out of work or just struggling to get by.

The question we anarchists have is “do the rules that come from the Senate, Congress, or any of the various states really do away with rigging the system, or are they part of what makes the system unfair”? It is true that the deregulation of the financial sector played a big role in making the system less fair and less transparent, but is that all the Republicans’ fault? Seems to me that Bill Clinton and the Democrats played a big role in that, so is Bill Clinton an anarchist too?

As for that transparency thing, there are a couple guys named Manning and Snowden who would probably tell you that President Obama is no more interested in transparency than his Republican predecessors. Are you getting all this down, NSA?

I could go on and on about this law or that law that makes life in this country less fair. I don't know that the Republicans are against these laws. Vaginal probes anyone?

And not that I have ever placed much faith in the electoral system, but how are those Republican voter I.D. laws working out for those of you who do? I remember when the U.S. military held the first elections in Iraq, all the Iraqis had to do was present their fingers to show they had no ink stains on them and our occupying military let them stick their finger in a bottle of ink and vote. Kind of simple wasn't it? Maybe that's how the majority ended up in power there (not that any government really operates according to majority rule). Good thing there weren't any Green Party candidates over there trying to get on the ballot.

Finally you say the anarchists are against building things together that we all need but can't build by ourselves and that it takes government to do that. Well, I admit the Republicans have been pretty stingy lately. But is either one of your propositions true, are Republicans against building stuff and does that make them anarchists? What about the Keystone Pipeline? The Republicans want to build that. That is pretty much a bipartisan issue. A lot of members of your party want to build that too.

On the other hand anarchists like roads, especially railroads and mass transit systems and other transportation that is more sustainable. We haven't seen much of an effort by either the Republicans or Democrats to do that, so it may not be so much a question of building stuff but what your priorities are that makes you an anarchist.

So just to clue you in, there is a difference between the Republicans and the anarchists. True, we have both been known to rant about "the government," but the difference between Republicans or Tea Baggers or the followers of Ayn Rand is that anarchists want liberty ... and equality. Because we know that you can't have one without the other. Equality in civil liberties. Equality in economic power. Equality in treatment regardless of what family you come from, or how you want to live your life. Liberty without equality is a political fiction.

Republicans don't want liberty and equality, but neither do the Democrats. Your Party is just as much to blame for the globalization and financialization of the economy that have replaced the old forms of capitalist exploitation with new ones based on low wages and lifetime financial debt. If given the choice between your Party and the Republicans, and a real alternative, many would choose to have neither one of you. So you and your counterparts on the other side of the aisle continue to play Americans against each other. Don't blame anarchists for the failings of your economic and political system.

Sincerely,

The Anarchists

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