

Tea party ideology follows Birch Society

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In 1960, I became interested in the John Birch Society. Its battle cry was “lower taxes and less government.” Fred Koch (Koch Industries) was the energy mogul with the financial power to fund the JBS.

Thirty years later, his sons, Charles and David Koch, joined their father with the Cato Institute. They believe in the “purest” definition of capitalism. Corporate income taxes were an abusive form of taxation since they are ultimately passed on to the consumer; and “natural market forces” should be the only form of regulation.

Libertarians and the tea party joined the “lower taxes, less government” movement, which made many citizens believe we would all be better off with very little government. Conservatives like myself believed that this movement is leading to the destruction of our democracy and eventually we will mirror Russia as another oligarchy.

Our Supreme Court then piled on with a liberal interpretation of “freedom of speech,” which insured that the very wealthy titans of industry could and would control Congress.

Today, conservatives who believe that good government does have a responsibility to regulate commerce are branded liberals. To the tea party, ideology is everything.

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