

Should you throw a drowning man a bootstrap?

Written by Bruce Enberg

Sunday, 29 July 2012 10:27 - Last Updated Sunday, 29 July 2012 10:45

The Republicans have trotted out an old talking point that you don't hear them use much with their taxes so low, but they think that you peasants should pay all the taxes. So here goes, "Say I start a business and so does my friend. His business fails and I succeed. Why should I be penalized for my success by paying income taxes, while he pays none?"

This almost sounds reasonable, and the knee jerk reaction is to try to justify taxes for all the good reasons we pay taxes. This is entirely wrong, that's what they want you to waste time on, while the basis of their argument continues to stand.

They are arguing from an entirely wrong premise (of course). To counter, begin by saying, "Starting a business is in the public interest." They won't disagree, but they'll want to. Forcing them to agree with you will knock them back on their heels.

Next say, "The reality is that both people who started businesses got massive tax breaks." They'll probably say, 'nah ungh', you can elaborate about all the infrastructure business uses, and how they didn't have to pay for any of this before they started a new business.

The successful business has to pay the taxes because it won the competition of the marketplace. You can't expect the loser to buy breakfast for everybody, they lost. The rightie will

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probably try to pivot to, "If you tax business, they will just pass it onto the consumer." That's not really true, but don't bother to correct him. Tell him, "Good, pass it on successful businessman. Then everybody pays the same, and isn't that what you were complaining about?"

You can expect much sputtering, they may even drown in their own drool. I wouldn't interfere, let them pull themselves up by their bootstraps.

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