

# Opinion: History repeating itself 100 years later

To the community,

Come the November election, a century ago Woodrow Wilson was elected president. A prime issue in the 1912 campaign was the heavy concentration of wealth in the hands of individuals and the trusts. Wilson believed such a condition was a threat to the republic. Today the republic faces such a threat. Plutocrats are on the rise. The prime issue in the 1912 election is alive one hundred years after Wilson's election.

In Steven Saylor's book "Roma" he wrote, "All the issues Americans deal with today in our polarized republic, the Romans dealt with first. Conservative politicians preached patriotism and religious piety and whipped up xenophobia hysteria ... At the other end of the political spectrum, rabble-rousers ... exploited the resentment of the struggling classes. Both sides used lawsuits and sexual scandals to drag down their opponents. Doesn't all this sound familiar?"



Bill Crawford

Yes, it does. We have deep social and economic inequality. Today our poor and middle class are getting poorer and the rich have become super rich. And the bloody shirt of war is being waved by political candidates for the office of chief executive and many members of Congress. They love the red herrings.

Saylor reminds us that, "The American republic has so far lasted only about half as long as did Rome's. Whether it will end with the rise of an all-powerful executive ... remains to be seen. There are certainly forces at work leading us in that direction."

Well, clearly we've been warned. Seems it's time to heed the message.

**Bill Crawford, South Lake Tahoe**