



OUR REBELLIOUS FOUNDERS, THE TEA PARTY, AND OWWch! - THREE “PEAS IN A POD”? OR NOT?

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Opposing Philosophies “From Different Planets” – The Result? Gridlock!

Recently, I discussed and explained (or tried to) our president’s affection and support for the chaotic “Occupy Whatever Wherever” movement (OWWch!). I also have given my understanding of why Obama is so dedicated to public policies which are collectivist/progressive in their intent.

Two philosophies prevail, and the “twain” just can’t seem to meet. On the one side are the collectivist/progressives, such as Obama, his administration, his voting base, and many democrats in congress – and their platform falls far “left” of anything the country has recently experienced. On the other side are many in congress and among the public who are reacting, perhaps unconsciously in some cases, to the progressives in power positions by moving a bit more to the right – and they are listening to many traditional constitutional conservatives and are drawn to what they are hearing, like limited federal government and individual liberty.

This phenomenon has been labeled as harmful and unnecessary “polarization.” Harmful, perhaps – but I personally believe it has been almost inevitable. I understand how people of conscience, on both sides of an issue, find themselves so philosophically opposed to an idea that they just can’t compromise. Think about it. We all have things we wouldn’t compromise on. Put a whole bunch of that in one deliberative body and, for good or ill, the result is congressional gridlock.

And Then Came Town Hall Meetings and Then

From my perspective, the Tea Party got its real start in 2009, largely as a reaction to the government’s passage of huge expenditures for stimulus/bailouts and the proposed health care legislation. Remember the “town hall meetings” during the health care debate in congress?

The modern day Tea Party and our “rebellious” Founders were soon being compared and described as similar populist movements, separated by over two centuries. Let’s take a look at why.

Comparing Our “Rebellious Founders” With the Tea Party

First Our Founders: To best describe *our founders’* motivation, look no further than the Declaration of Independence:

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and Nature’s God entitle them [and it] requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

..... And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our Sacred Honor.

WOW! And in keeping with their need to specifically explain themselves, our Founders went on to elaborate on 22 complaints against the King of Great Britain. These complaints object to government without consent, injustice, obstruction, the plundered population, constrained citizens, inadequate judiciary, overall oppression and subjugation, and on and on. **In other words it was all about individual rights, freedom and liberty.**

The Tea Party: While the **Tea Party** is not homogeneous, and is still “loose knit” organizationally, they have developed The Tea Party’s stated mission:

To attract, educate, organize, and mobilize our fellow citizens to secure public policy consistent with our three core values of Fiscal Responsibility, Constitutionally Limited Government and Free Markets.

The core values are derived from the Declaration of Independence, The U.S. Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. The name “Tea Party” is an obvious “tip of the hat” to the Boston Tea Party in 1773 which protested excess taxation by the British, as well as “taxation without representation.”

The “planks” in the TP’s unofficial “Contract from America” include goals that emphasize: constitutional authority, limited government, effective and efficient federal government, energy independence, balanced budget, et. al. It’s interesting that, considered individually, **a large majority of the U.S. population supports most of their goals!**

TPers universally express their feelings about the worldwide role the U.S. should play. While they agree on the general concept of American Exceptionalism, **they are far from united in the way this should manifest itself in international policies.** Some are more isolationist – avoiding international involvement (e.g. Ron Paul). Others tend to favor a more aggressive response to maintaining America’s primacy in international relations – while still seeking to avoid being drawn into unnecessary conflicts (e.g. Sarah Palin).

The similarities of these two movements, our Founders and the TPers, are obvious and deserve positive, favorable comparisons.

Tea Party and OWWch! – Comparisons Being Made

When the “Occupations” began a few weeks ago, much of the traditional media coverage focused on making comparisons with the recently evolved Tea Party. Obama and many democrats expressed their opinion that OWWch! and the Tea Party had a lot in common – in fact they were after the same objectives. If we take a compare the activities and goals of the two “movements,” we can draw our own conclusions:

- In the prior section I summarized the expressed goals and priorities of the Tea Party.
VS. The only common thread for OWWch! seems to be chaos and anarchy.
- The TP proudly supports our form of government, the constitution and the free market.
VS. OWWch! wants to bury our form of government and destroy capitalism.
- The TP conducted very orderly, law abiding (but lively!) debates and demonstrations.
VS. There have been frequent attempts by OWWch! organizers to promote violence.
- The TP distinguished themselves by cleaning up the public areas used for their gatherings.
VS. Public employees needed “rubber gloves and masks ” to clean up after OWWch!

Mallard Fillmore by Bruce Tinsley



- The TP, while expressing frustration, proclaims a belief in respect for self and the individual.
VS. OWWch! while expressing frustration, clearly proclaims class envy and angst.
- The TP believes that greater freedom and less government, would give us more prosperity.
VS. OWWch! wants government to seize ever more control of our wealth.

What’s the Worst That’s Been Said About Each?

Some things that have been said about the **Tea Party** is that they are “racist and dangerous.” That’s absurd! The TPer’s opinions about the role of government and responsible economic policy are often represented in the traditional media as being ignorant, uninformed, racially motivated, and glaring evidence of bigotry. They have been attacked as racist only because they believe in spending less on government programs which are wasteful, and bankrupting the country. There are accusations of racial comments having been expressed – all have been discredited as untrue. Even the Washington Post determined that there was very little concern, among TP supporters, about Obama’s race, religion, or ethnic background. Of course with any group there will be radical extremists with outrageous views. The **mainstream TPer’s do not reflect an extreme AT ALL!**

Things that have been said about **OWWch!** include that they are confused and unfocused – which is demonstrably true. And that they have made racist/anti-semitic comments. These have been recorded and are readily available. They have been accused of being violent, and there is adequate evidence that organizers commonly attempt to incite violence – often successfully.

Mallard Fillmore by Bruce Tinsley



It seems to me that the mainstream media spent many months condemning the Tea Party as a “potentially violent and hate filled “mob.” There was no basis for that. And then, a truly violent and hate filled group turns up spouting radical leftist notions, and the president expressed his support,

and the mainstream media met the movement and embraced it. It's almost as though the liberal media needed a "Tea Party to call their own."



I will grant that the OWWch! movement originally had a few legitimate concerns and complaints. But their cause has been hijacked by many Obama supporters, anarchists, Marxists, unions, public service unions, criminal drug interests, Hollywood celebs, and numerous other misguided groups.

A democratic pollster, Douglas Schoen, polled the Zuccotti Park occupiers and found that:

“the movement doesn’t represent unemployed America and is not ideologically diverse. Rather, it comprises an unrepresentative segment of the electorate that believes in radical redistribution of the wealth, civil disobedience, and, in some instances, violence [most of them share] a deep commitment to left-wing politics: opposition to free-market capitalism and support for radical redistribution of wealth.

Schoen shows that 31% say they would engage in violence to advance their agenda. So much for the Washington Post theory of who these people are – i.e. Tea Party equivalents.

My final reaction: I believe it is unprecedented and a bit sad, that a U.S. President would align himself in any way with an anti-constitutional movement, which I believe OWWch! has become. A destruction of our “republican” (not the party) system is what the movement is all about. But, this is following the Alinsky model, after all.