



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on August 1, 2010

Beck Closely Examines Tea Party Movement

Fridays on the Glenn Beck program have been dubbed “Founders’ Fridays,” as Beck has used those days to discuss the founding of America. Last Friday’s episode, however, was unique in that it was about the “Refounding” of America, a movement that has gained momentum at the hands of the Tea Parties, according to Beck.

Beck’s introductory monologue emphasized the significance of the Tea Party movement, declaring, “I believe the Republic is at stake.” He credited the Tea Partiers as people willing to stand up for the Republic, and as such, declared them heroes.



However, on this special, Beck did not simply celebrate the Tea Party movement, he also addressed allegations that the Tea Party movement is imploding.

He began, “The headlines are everywhere: ‘Tea Party: Dead on Arrival?’ — ‘Party Foul! Tea Partiers Eat Their Own in Bitter Internal Feud’ — ‘A Fissure in the Tea Party Movement.’ But is it true?”

Guests from the most prominent Tea Party groups — 9/12 Project, Freedom Works, Tea Party Patriots, National Tea Party Federation — responded with a collective “no.”

Accusations that the Tea Party movement is split rest primarily on issues between the Tea Party Express and most other Tea Party organizations. Tea Party Express spokesman Mark Williams attracted a great deal of negative attention from the media with controversial statements like “Allah is a monkey God.”

Likewise, members of the Tea Party Express, including President Amy Kremer, stood in support of Williams until only recently, prompting other Tea Party organizations to reject the Tea Party Express for not aligning itself with the values espoused by the Tea Party movement.

With the exception of this rift, the Tea Party groups seem to have formed a united front against the progressive agenda.

Jenny Beth Martin, co-founder of the Tea Party Patriots and one of the “100 Most Influential People in America” according to *Time* magazine, believes that the Tea Parties are united. “The theme that brought these people together ... were three core values: fiscal responsibility, a constitutionally limited government, and free markets. That we all agree on. And then, we encourage local groups to do what works for them.”

Likewise, Matt Kibbe, president of Freedom Works, a Tea Party organization that claims more than one million members and 600,000 online activists, explains that Freedom Works has organized rallies with members of a variety of Tea Party groups.

Beck’s guests noted that the Left’s allegations of splits in the Tea Party came only after several other failed attempts to discredit the Tea Parties.



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One favored tactic utilized by the mainstream media is to label Tea Partiers as merely disgruntled Republicans, even though establishment Republicans are largely opposed to the work of the Tea Partiers.

According to Beck, the Tea Parties are not about politics, despite the Left's attempt at depicting them as such, but about the core values outlined by Martin. Pointing to examples of Tea Parties that have endorsed Conservative Democrats while simultaneously ousting Republicans that have rejected these very values, evidence that the Tea Party movement is apolitical is insurmountable.

In fact, Mark Kibbe explains that the Tea Party movement needs to "first defeat the Republicans, then defeat the Democrats," and finally remain vigilant in ensuring that the values of the Founding Fathers are maintained.

To boot, Martin explains that the Tea Party Patriots, as a "bottom-up organization, decided with a vote of 97 percent not to endorse political candidates nationally.

Similarly, the Left has attempted to brand the Tea Partiers as a movement comprised of violent racists.

Addressing these accusations, the guests admitted that with membership in the millions, the Tea Parties are bound to be infiltrated by racists and violent activists, as is any other organization. What is important, instead, is how the Tea Parties react to those members. These guests have expressed a zero tolerance policy, as exhibited by their reaction to the Tea Party Express.

Yvonne Donnelly, National Chair of the 9/12 Project founded by Glenn Beck, explained that racism is in stark contrast to the goals of the 9/12 Project. "On 9/12, we stood shoulder to shoulder as Americans. It wasn't about color. It wasn't about religion. And that's what we're working towards: standing together as Americans."

Mark Kibbe adds, "This is a color-blind movement."

Jenny Martin noted the irony of the mainstream media's attempts to paint the Tea Party movement as violent when the violence, in fact comes from the Left. She shared that on September 11, while making final arrangements for the September 12 rally, she and several other Tea Partiers were forced to evacuate the building as a result of a bomb threat. With the exception of Glenn Beck, the story was largely kept out of the media.

Likewise, Martin listed other examples of leftist violence, including the violent beating of conservative Kenneth Gladney by SEIU members and violence against Florida Tea Partiers by critics.

Skoda adds that Tea Partiers often receive hate mail and threatening voicemails from opposition groups.

Kibbe warns viewers that the Left has created a group of "Tea Party crashers" that purposely infiltrate the movement and act offensively in order to discredit the movement.

Besides the Left's failed attempts to discredit the Tea Parties, Beck articulated concerns that the Tea Party movement may grow weary in the face of pretentious politicians that have largely ignored the will of the people.

Fortunately, frustration has yet to transition to hopelessness. In fact, all guests agreed that the frustration continues to fuel the fire of the movement.

Mark Skoda of the National Tea Party Federation adds, "In a year and a half, we went from what I call visceral emotional elements of Tea Party rallies and signs to where we are now. We're actually making



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a difference.”

Matt Kibbe contends, “The Tea Party has had a tremendous impact ... we’re driving public opinion.... The American people agree with us.”



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