



Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on December 7, 2011

Gingrich Interview: Glenn Beck Slices, Dices Newt's Phony Conservative Credentials

Beck led off the tough-but-cordial [interview](#) with a clip of Gingrich claiming that the federal government's regulation of healthcare was acceptable. "I'm a Theodore Roosevelt Republican," Gingrich said in the footage. "On health, where I come from, I'm a Theodore Roosevelt Republican and I believe government can lead and that regulatory leading is okay."

Beck [responded](#) in a civil but firm tone that "Regulation and the government scares the crap out of me, and I think most Tea Party kind of leaning conservatives. And Theodore Roosevelt was the guy who started the Progressive Party."



It only went downhill from there for Gingrich, who came out for federal healthcare and OSHA-style regulations. Gingrich had tacked on the following [conservative, market-oriented sound-byte](#) to the end of his on-air reply justifying why federal intervention in healthcare is necessary: "I'm against government trying to pick winners and losers."

Beck was prepared with a reply, and [shot back](#): "But you have selected a winner when you are for — quite strongly — the ethanol subsidies." Indeed, the ethanol lobby has handsomely paid Gingrich (at least [\\$315,000](#)) for the same kind of quasi-lobbying he's been in hot water for doing on behalf of mortgage giant Freddie Mac (which [paid him \\$1.6 million](#) during the height of the housing bubble).

Gingrich changed the subject, meaning that he didn't deny the claim and admitted by default that his words about being "against government trying to pick winners and losers" was a lie. Indeed, Gingrich doubled-down on Beck. He [declared in favor of government picking more winners and losers](#) by having more taxpayer dollars shipped off to oil companies: "I supported, I favored the incentive to go out and find more oil and gas. Now, that's a tax subsidy. It's a bigger tax subsidy than ethanol ever got."

Gingrich went on to confirm the flip-flop explicitly moments later, [saying](#) that government should pick winners and losers with subsidies in order to control people's behavior: "What I object to is subsidizing things that don't work and things that aren't creating a better future. And the problem with the modern welfare state is it actually encourages people to the wrong behaviors, encourages them not to work, encourages them not to study."

Beck then moved on to Gingrich's high-profile [support](#) for George W. Bush's runaway Medicare prescription-drug entitlement program in 2005: "You said if you are a fiscal conservative who cares about balancing the federal budget, there may be no more important bill to vote on in your career than in support of this bill. This was what you said about a new entitlement, Medicare prescription drug program.... you're trying to transition into smaller government by also supporting a bill that has in it a gigantic giveaway?"



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Beck also pointed out to Gingrich a [litany](#) of the former House Speaker's liberal positions. "You voted for the Department of Education, you in 2007 said [you would be] very cautious about changing Fannie and Freddie. On global warming, with sitting down on the couch with Nancy Pelosi, and I would agree with you that was the dumbest moment — you know, it would have been the dumbest moment of my life. And I agree with that." Beck [stressed](#) that Gingrich's "green conservatism" had actually placed him to the left of Massachusetts Democrat John Kerry.

Beck: But when you look at, it's not a moment of your life. In speech after speech, in your book *Contract with the Earth*, even with John Kerry in a debate, you said this:

Gingrich : Evidence is sufficient, but we should move towards the most effective possible steps to reduce carbon looting of the atmosphere."

Beck eventually [noted](#) that "Help me out. This is a multi-year stance. It's not a moment in your life."

No, it wasn't a moment in Gingrich's life. It was every moment of his life that wasn't an election year. Beck's interview helped tremendously in revealing that fact, and it helped expose Gingrich's election-year conversion to conservative rhetoric. Moreover, Beck demonstrated it was an inconsistent conversion due to lack of practice.

Photo of Newt Gingrich: AP Images



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