



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on May 15, 2013

IRS Investigations Used in the Past to Intimidate and Punish

The recent admissions of guilt by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) that it [deliberately targeted conservative non-profits](#) for intimidation have forced to the surface a long list of other IRS abuses that have faded from public memory with the passage of time.

The IRS has been a tool of intimidation and neutralization for decades under administrations as far back [as President Franklin Roosevelt's in the 1930s](#). Former IRS commissioner Mortimer Caplin said that IRS audits of non-profits during the Eisenhower administration were "notoriously aggressive" and that the IRS was complicit in President Kennedy's "[Ideological Special Organizations Project](#)," which targeted conservative groups with audits and other harassment measures. The Nixon administration was noted for its aggressive use of a specially selected group of IRS auditors aimed at Nixon's enemies, numbering more than 3,000 groups and 8,000 individuals.

During the Clinton administration, the IRS targeted Clinton accusers Paula Jones, Gennifer Flowers, Juanita Broaddrick, and even the White House Travel Office Director Billy Dale. In addition, conservative non-profits were aggressively audited, including Citizens for a Sound Economy, the Christian Film and Television Commission, the National Rifle Association, the Heritage Foundation, Citizens Against Government Waste, Citizens for Honest Government, *National Review*, *American Spectator*, Freedom Alliance, the National Center for Public Policy Research, the American Policy Center, American Cause, the Progress and Freedom Foundation, and Concerned Women for America.

Using the IRS as a tool to harass, intimidate, and punish enemies during the present administration is [not limited to just conservative non-profit groups](#). The Koch brothers were subjected to negative public exposure when former chairman of Obama's Council of Economic Advisors, Austan Goolsbee, told reporters back on August 27, 2010 that their company, Koch Industries, paid no income taxes. But since Koch Industries is privately held by Charles and David Koch, there is no way Goolsbee could have known that information unless he had been provided it, illegally, from the IRS. When the White House was pressed for Goolsbee's source, it referred to two separate websites where the information was available. However, when neither of those websites contained the information, the White House changed its story and claimed simply that Goolsbee [had made a lucky guess](#).





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During the 2012 president election, a pro-gay “marriage” group, The Human Rights Campaign, published information that an organization tied to Mitt Romney had made a \$10,000 contribution to the National Organization for Marriage (NOM). Said NOM’s President Brian Brown:

There is little question that one or more employees at the IRS stole our confidential tax return and leaked it to our political enemies, in violation of federal law.

The only questions are who did it and whether there was any knowledge or coordination between people in the White House, the Obama reelection campaign and the Human Rights Campaign.

And then there’s Barack Obama’s classmate at Columbia University, Wayne Allyn Root, who has for years been attacking the Obama administration and the president for his lack of forthrightness about his time at Columbia. [Wrote Root](#):

I am the face of Obama’s IRS attacks. I am proof of how bad it is, when it started, that it was directed at individuals as well as groups, and that it did not involve only “low level IRS employees.”

For 30 years Root, a successful entrepreneur and noisy opponent of the president, has filed his income taxes without an audit. Then, in January 2011, he received a phone call (not the usual letter) from an IRS agent that he was under investigation and that the agent considered it “an honor” to be doing the audit. The audit was so rigorous that every deduction claimed had to be proven with backup paperwork and receipts, even his mortgage deduction. The audit took 18 months and ended only when a court ruled that his return was clean.

Five days later Root [got a call from his tax accountant](#): “Are you sitting down? I don’t know what to say but the IRS just contacted me and you’re being audited again!”

Said Root: “That order had to come from the highest levels of government. Obama is using the power of the IRS and other government agencies to punish his political opposition and intimidate and silence his critics.”

Root is not alone. On April 20, 2012, Frank VanderSloot, CEO of Melaleuca, Inc., [appeared on the White House’s “enemies list”](#) and in June was targeted by two government agencies — the IRS announcing an audit of his returns for 2008 and 2009, and the Department of Labor (DOL) informing him of an audit of the workers he employs on his Idaho cattle ranch. VanderSloot’s crime? He served as Mitt Romney’s finance committee co-chairman in 2008 and in 2012 and [contributed \\$1.1 million to Romney’s campaign](#).

On Tuesday Obama’s Attorney General Eric Holder, who is himself the center of the Fast and Furious gun-running scandal and other scandals, promised to look into the matter, claiming that he has “ordered an investigation” and that his office was “examining the facts to see if there were criminal violations.”

The only way to excise this cancer from the body politic is to end the income tax and terminate the Internal Revenue Service. Unless and until that happens, the IRS and other government agencies, such as the DOL, will continue to be used as tools of retribution and to run rampant over citizens’ rights, punishing and intimidating and neutralizing them in the freedom fight, no matter who is in the White House.

A graduate of Cornell University and a former investment advisor, Bob is a regular contributor to The New American magazine and blogs frequently at www.LightFromTheRight.com, primarily on economics and politics. He can be reached at badelman@thenewamerican.com.



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