



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on May 2, 2011

Nothing New in Charge of Racism Against Birthers

The ugly charge that birthers are racist opponents of President Obama, who don't want a black man in the White House, continues the leftist tradition of smearing opponents to neutralize them. Ever since Obama took the oath, liberals have attacked on this front, tossing around the undefined term "racist" to limit debate and portray opposition to the President as unreasonable and deriving solely from his complexion.



Four other examples besides the latest smear lodged at the birthers are illustrative: the left's insistence that Tea Party members are racists in general; the false charge that Tea Party members shouted racial epithets at black congressmen; the laughable claim that opposing ObamaCare is racist; and the allegation that the word "socialist" is really code for the "n-word."

Charge: Tea Party Members Are Racist

This claim [found expression](#) in columnist Cynthia Tucker's appearance on [MSNBC's Hardball](#) with Chris Matthews. Here is the exchange with Matthews, who gave Tucker the opening:

CHRIS MATTHEWS: Put 100 of these people in a room. Strap them into gurneys. Inject them with sodium pentathol. How many of them would say "I don't like the idea of having a black president"? What percentage?

CYNTHIA TUCKER: Oh, I'm just guessing. This is just off the cuff. I think 45 to 65% of the people who appear at these groups are people who will never be comfortable with the idea of a black president.

Naturally, Tucker had no proof for this claim, given that it was off the cuff, but she made the charge nonetheless.

New York Times columnist Paul Krugman [has made](#) similar charges. Wrote Krugman in 2009, "the driving force behind the town hall mobs is probably the same cultural and racial anxiety that's behind the birther movement, which denies Mr. Obama's citizenship."

When the Tea Party reached the zenith of its rage and power during the debate over ObamaCare, Obama's black congressional supporters took it upon themselves to march directly through a knot of Tea Party protesters on Capitol Hill. The black congressmen [then claimed](#) they were hit with racial epithets, and Rep. [John Lewis](#) ((D-Ga.)), the ballyhooed hero of the civil rights movement, alleged that someone shouted the "n-word."

But [it never](#) happened. No one has produced a video in which any Tea Party member shouted anything racial at any of the black congressmen, and [Andrew Breitbart offered](#) \$10,000 to the United Negro



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College Fund in return for any video evidence of racial epithets. When that reward didn't get results, [he upped](#) the ante to \$100,000. That was March 2010. A year later, no one has collected the reward.

Despite the obvious falsehood of the charge, [the Associated Press expected](#) Bretibart to prove that Tea Partiers did not shout the epithets, a logical impossibility because one cannot prove a negative; i.e. one cannot prove something did not happen.

On the ObamaCare question, race hustler Jesse Jackson went so far as to claim that any black person who opposed ObamaCare isn't really black. [Said Jackson](#), "You can't vote against healthcare and call yourself a black man." This attacks ObamaCare opponents as racist from another direction by equating ObamaCare with civil rights. If one cannot oppose civil rights unless he is a black Uncle Tom or a white racist, and if ObamaCare is equivalent to civil rights, then opposing it must mean one is either a black Uncle Tom or a white racist.

The *New York Times* [even began](#) a story about the titanic struggle to pass ObamaCare with an anecdotal lead about the participation of Rep. Lewis in the famous march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama:

Forty-five years ago, John Lewis began the third of what became society-shifting civil rights marches from Selma to Montgomery, Ala. On Sunday, the anniversary of that famous trek, he joined hands with fellow House Democrats and marched past jeering protesters into the Capitol to remake the nations health care system.

Today we are walking again, and we will be walking into history, Mr. Lewis, a Georgian, said as the House neared the climax of a marathon health care debate that has stirred partisan passions across the nation and allowed Democrats to claim an achievement that has eluded them for decades. This is our time.

Several hours later, Mr. Lewis and 223 other Democrats strode onto the House floor to formally record their yes votes to lift the bill past its main procedural hurdle, brushing aside Republican warnings of political doom and epithets aimed at them over the weekend from a few of the more strident opponents.

Like Jackson's, [this equation](#) is obvious: Opposing ObamaCare is tantamount to opposing civil rights for blacks because Democrats, led by civil rights deity Lewis, "strode" to the House floor to cast their vote for wrecking the country's health-care system.

Don't Call Obama a Socialist

So one may not oppose ObamaCare without inviting the imprecation that he is a racist. But other sins are even easier to commit than opposing Obama's policies. Even characterizing the policies for what they are can earn one the racist label. Socialist [is now](#) a "code word" to disparage blacks. Carlos Watson, a commentator for MSNBC, [offered this opinion](#) on using the "S-word" to describe Obama:

Today I want to talk about a word that we're hearing more and more, and that's the word socialist. You hear it from a lot of conservatives these days, that's usually critiquing the President, or more broadly Democrats. And while that's certainly a legitimate critique, there certainly is an ideology that can and should be critiqued at certain times, it also some times is just a kind of a generic conservative bludgeoning tool. And that's alright, too, because you hear it on the Democratic side as well: right wing nut, what have you.

But what concerns me is when in some of those town hall meetings including the one that we saw



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in Missouri recently where there were jokes made about lynching, etc., you start to wonder whether in fact the word socialist is becoming a code word, whether or not socialist is becoming the new N-word for frankly for some angry upset birthers and others. I hope that's not the case, but it sure does say to you what David Brooks said the other day on T.V. which is that more credible conservatives have to stand up and say that there's a line that has to be drawn, that there's a line of responsibility that's important, and that extends to the words that we choose including how [we] choose even legitimate words like socialist.

A columnist for the *Kansas City Star*, Lewis Diuguid, [peddled a similar line](#) in 2008: The socialist label that Sen. John McCain and his GOP presidential running mate Sarah Palin are trying to attach to Sen. Barack Obama actually has long and very ugly historical roots," he wrote. As well, J. Edgar Hoover, director of the FBI from 1924 to 1972, used the term liberally to describe African Americans who spent their lives fighting for equality."

A man who doesn't know his history, Diuguid [then listed](#) a few prominent black activists from the past who were, indeed, socialist. And two of them were apologists for mass murderer Josef Stalin.



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