



Written by [Mary McHugh](#) on July 19, 2010

Tea Party Cartoon Outrages Ohio State House Candidate

Just before the July 4th weekend at the Ohio Statehouse, the Assistant Director of the House Democratic Communications Office distributed a daily e-mail to all staff members of the House of Representatives there. Keary McCarthy, a spokesman for the Ohio Speaker of the House, Democrat Armond Budish, explained that such an e-mail of diverse political opinions is sent to lawmakers of both parties each day.



Only on this day it contained a political [cartoon](#) by Bill Day of United Features Syndicate. Day is quoted in his [UFS bio](#) as saying, "I have great fun drawing and using humor in my cartoons. But when a terrible injustice occurs, I'll use the most powerful images possible to address it."

Part of the e-mail package this day was a caricature — Mr. Day's portrayal of an oversized Klan member with a pistol hanging from his side. He is holding a sign having a sickly-looking President Obama drawn on it with the word "socialism" underneath. This Klan member also has a tea bag hanging from his hood. He is facing a middle aged couple, with tea bags hanging from their hats, who are dressed in red, white and blue outfits; all three people are white.

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Mr. Day has the man addressing the KKK character and saying: "Didn't you get the word? Glenn Beck on Faux News said this time not to wear our robes, carry placards, or pack heat!"

For now, the cartoon's creator is being ignored. The focus instead is on the Ohio Democrats whose Communications Office decided to make sure the offensive, misleading picture made the rounds.

Which brings us to [Mike Wilson](#), Republican. He is running for Ohio's 28th House District and is a leader of the Tea Party movement there. He sent an outraged [letter](#) to his Democratic opponent, Connie Pillich (D-Montgomery), in response to the cartoon's circulation at the State House. It says in part:

I write to you today to express my deep disappointment in you and your party.... The fact that your party is engaging in this sort of denigrating conduct and that you accept it by failing to speak out against it demonstrates that you, along with the Democratic Party, have deep problems that go far beyond fiscal irresponsibility.

As you know, Representative Pillich, I founded the Cincinnati Tea Party. I have organized and spoken at many rallies and meetings with thousands of people in attendance including some of the largest in the nation. Never once have I seen a single person dressed in traditional Klan garb, and never once have I ever seen or heard a racist remark. I have seen a few signs that while not racist, were in poor taste, but it was clear from the reaction of those nearby that only a tiny fringe holds those offensive beliefs.



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The Tea Party movement has rallied around minority candidates that share their fiscally conservative values. Many supported Ken Blackwell's gubernatorial bid in 2006, have written approvingly of Justice Clarence Thomas' work on the Supreme Court, and are strong backers of minority 2010 candidates such as Lt. Colonel Allen West.

An apology is owed to the good people of the Tea Party movement. They have legitimate concerns about out-of-control government spending and the size of government. This false caricature cheapens our political discourse and should be out of bounds....

What liberals throughout the United States fail to understand is that the Tea Parties exist to combat policies that are killing jobs, raising taxes and encouraging a new class of dependent Americans who know only the life of government assistance. It is the reason that many changes will occur this fall across the nation and Ohio.

The reason I believe that your party is engaging in the dark behavior of hatred and bigotry is that you understand that liberal policies are failing and that voters are awakening to this fact. Instead of tackling the issues head on, changing your policies and making our state and nation great again, you have chosen the low road in trying to paint your opponents in a dishonest manner

Mike Wilson has just about said it all.

Photo of Ohio Statehouse: AP Images



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