



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on January 18, 2010

## Turning Republicans into Teapublicans

Tea Party activists are trying to take over the Republican Party from the ground up, according to the New York Times.

There are many pieces to the Tea Party puzzle, described as a “diverse, rambunctious and Internet-connected network of groups”. This includes [Tea Party Nation](#) which describes itself as a “user-driven group of like-minded people who desire our God-given Individual Freedoms which were written out by the Founding Fathers, [who] believe in Limited Government, Free Speech, the 2nd Amendment, our Military, Secure Borders and our Country.”



[Our Country Deserves Better](#) is a political action committee that “is leading the fight to champion the Reaganesque conservatism of lower taxes, smaller government, strong national defense, and respect for the strength of the family as the core of a strong America.”

Another political action committee which is one of the Tea Party groups is [FreedomWorks](#) whose mission statement says, “We believe this can be a historic year for those seeking an end to the out-of-control spending, tax hikes, bailouts, and wide-spread growth of government that continues to run rampant in Washington, D.C.”

The [Tea Party Express](#) is organized by Our Country Deserves Better as a cross country caravan starting its third national tour on March 27th in Searchlight, Nevada (the home town of Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid) and ending in Washington, D.C. on April 15th. This tour is a reprise of the first tour which ended in Washington last September 12th:

September 12, 2009 was a historic day for patriotic, grassroots Americans who care about freedom," says Brendan Steinhauser, director of federal and state campaigns for FreedomWorks. "The momentum has continued, and we expect hundreds of tax day protests on April 15, 2010 around the country. But the biggest event of all will be right outside the White House, where President Obama can hear and see us.

The date of September 12th honored another Tea Party group, [The 912 Project](#) founded by Glenn Beck and based on 9 Principles and 12 Values important to the Tea Partiers.

Other pieces to the Tea Party puzzle are sponsoring the First National Tea Party [Convention](#) to be held in Nashville, Tennessee in early February, including Tea Party Emporium, Judicial Watch, Eagle Forum, The Leadership Institute, Vision America, SurgeUSA, Smart Girl Politics, and the National Taxpayers Union. Speakers include Judge Roy Moore and Rep. Michele Bachmann (R-Minn.), and Sarah Palin for the keynote address.

Such diversity, however, has its drawbacks as noted in [MichNews.com](#):



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Divided across hundreds of factionalized efforts often operating at odds with each other, they were of no great concern to anyone. But united in number, purpose and strategy, the people present a grave political threat to everyone in DC currently operating as if the will of the people doesn't matter anymore.

A recent poll at [Rasmussen Reports](#) that found a generic Tea Party candidate finishing ahead of a Republican candidate raised the question about a third political party opposing Republicans and Democrats. Eric Odom, founder of Tax Day Tea Party, said, "Tea Party Patriots is issuing this statement in order to make it clear that we are not associated with...any attempts to form a third party. Additionally, we believe that such efforts are unproductive and unwise at this time. The history of third party movements in this country is one of division and defeat. We believe that it is instead time for all Americans to rise up and demand appropriate reform within their own parties. The mechanisms exist for citizens to participate in their parties, and to drive their parties in the right direction."

The recent special election in the 23rd Congressional District of New York was a "[defining experience](#)" for many Tea Party groups. Because of huge efforts by conservative activists, the liberal Republican candidate dropped out of the race, only to leave the field open for the Democrat candidate to win the seat.

Although many considered their efforts as a victory, they also saw the divisive nature of the contest turn the seat over to a liberal Democrat. "No more NY-23's!" is now "the rallying cry for more local involvement" by activists intent on changing political outcomes.

The strategy that has spread rapidly across the internet is "[The Neighborhood Precinct Committeeman Strategy](#)" which, according to the popular website [Resistnet.com](#) "entails a tried-and-true, peaceful, Constitutional, ballot box solution to our present political predicament." According to the strategy, all one has to do is to "go to a Republican Party meeting or walk a precinct on behalf of a candidate." According to Darla who outlined this strategy in detail, presidential candidate Obama used this strategy to defeat Hillary Clinton. She says, "You don't have to believe me — see the evidence with your own eyes. Search YouTube using the search words 'obama precinct captain'."

She goes on to say:

We need more than feel-good Tea Parties. Do not get me wrong; the Tea Parties are great for networking and for physically demonstrating our numbers and wrath to the existing officeholders. The April 15, 2008 Tea Parties affected Obama and his minions. They first tried to ignore them. After the Tea Parties received media coverage, Obama and those who write his teleprompter scripts started to bad-mouth them. Obama's friends in the mainstream media ridiculed the Tea Partiers. But, we need more than rallies and choir-preaching on internet blogs and web sites. Let's face it — no Tea Party on April 15, 2009, had the numbers that Obama had at many of his rallies. Not one of those Tea Parties would have even filled up half of a Major League ball park. Those are the facts. With Twitter and Facebook, etc., perhaps those numbers will increase, and I hope they do. The relatively small numbers who have turned out for Tea Parties, as compared to Obama rallies during the campaign, is not surprising — conservatives work for a living, unlike many of Obama's supporters. We don't have time to go to rallies. But, here's the bottom line: unless those Tea Parties translate into election victories in 2010, they are worthless.

The mantra of the strategy is: "Take the precinct, take the state, take the party." Darla says, "It's a numbers game. The more Constitution-respecting conservatives join the precinct committeeman ranks,



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the more Constitution-respecting, and conservative, the leadership will be. And then, that conservative, Constitution-respecting leadership will endorse the candidate in the primary who is most faithful to the Constitution.”

This strategy is already yielding results. Tony Warren, founder of the National Precinct Alliance, talked about success in Nevada:

We banded together with members of the other like minded groups, invaded and took control of the Clark County GOP. We then spread the message to our other members in the State who used Clark County as the model. Here it is by the numbers. Last May, the Clark County “RINO” [Republican In Name Only] Central Committee had 300 members and only about 1/2 of them were active. As of yesterday, it is 600 active members strong and the vast majority are like minded grassroots conservatives who vote. Our movement took the County by surprise and then the State by force of numbers. To me, it is no longer a question of, “Can this work?” It is a question of when the rest of the Patriots in our Country [will] put forth the small amount of effort required to do the same thing.

Odom [confirmed](#) this: “I checked into this and I found it to be 100% accurate. This movement in Nevada has indeed caused a significant shift in the party structure across the state...it makes it clear that if the [Tea Party] movement really wanted to put the [Republican] party back in the hands of true fiscal conservatives...it’s entirely possible to make it happen.”

In Holland, Pennsylvania, a local Tea Party group held a candidate forum where the candidates were asked a number of questions, including if they thought 2010 would be “the year of the Tea Party.” The candidates agreed, but “only if the Tea Party advocates worked the system.”

Just because it’s 2010 [doesn’t mean](#) that Republicans are “due for a change.” Thomas Sowell said Republicans “are no more likely to get a hit in this at bat than at any other time. In other words, there is no such thing as being ‘due.’ ”

Maybe it will happen. The polls show that the voting public is getting more and more fed up with the Obama administration and with both houses of Congress that are dominated by Democrats. But, when election day comes, nobody can vote for polls. It still takes a candidate to beat a candidate — and the question is whether the Republicans come up with the kinds of candidates that can win.

The stakes in this fall’s elections go far beyond the fate of either the Republican party or the Democratic party. The fate of America is on the line.



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