

Racist Elements in the Tea Party

By [Global Research](#)

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At its annual convention in Kansas City, the NAACP on Tuesday issued a [report](#) stating that the loose alliance of Right-wing interests collectively known as the “Tea Party” had “racist elements” within its ranks. Putative leaders of the movement roundly denounced the allegation. Sarah Palin, often seen as the unofficial representative of the new American Right, [asserted](#) that the NAACP’s accusation of Tea Party racism was “...false, appalling and is a regressive and diversionary tactic to change the subject at hand.” Mark Williams, billed as the “Tea Party Express spokesman,” [refused](#) to say that the Tea Party does not welcome racists, instead asserting, “Racists have their own movement. It’s called the NAACP.”

Even as the Tea Party’s media representatives were denying the charge leveled by the long-standing civil rights organization, its own members seemed to be working at cross purposes to the benignly non-racist image Palin and others were trying to set forth. The Right-wing Washington Times, owned and controlled by the shadowy ex-convict Sun Myung Moon, founder and head of the global cult known as the Unification Church, headlined an editorial attacking the NAACP with the title, “Kill the Crackers,” apparently accusing the NAACP of trying to incite murderous violence against Whites. Further depleting the credibility of denials from Tea Party officials, White supremacy Websites quickly published their own attacks on the NAACP in particular and, in some cases, Black activists more generally. A number of Right-wing commentators and officials brought up a case of [voter intimidation by the New Black Panther Party](#) as exemplary of African-American racism targeting Whites.

As if the rank-and-file factions had not already offered troubling evidence contrary to denials of racism within the Tea Party, the seemingly official “North Iowa Tea Party” bought ad space on a billboard in Mason City, Iowa, and [posted](#) an appalling sign associating U.S. President Barack Obama with Adolf Hitler and Vladimir Lenin.



Despite the claim by North Iowa Tea Party founder Ben Johnson that the sign would 'remain up for a month,' it was hauled down within a day as national Tea Party personnel [scrambled to distance the movement](#) from a (quite literally) towering example of its members' troubled mentality and outrageously preposterous hyperbole.

The NAACP accused the Tea Party of having racist elements in its ranks. Notwithstanding the furious denials of this allegation by Sarah Palin and other inspirational forces within the movement, the actions, words, and behavior of Tea Party members provide ample evidence that the Tea Party, for all its apparent lack of central command and control, does in fact have powerful undercurrents not only of racism, but also of nativism and generalized vitriol.

From the daily, appalling statements—both direct and in coded language—of Right-wing extremists like radio talk show host Rush Limbaugh to the vile racial epithets hurled at Congressmen of color during last year's run-up to passage of national health care legislation (with the Tea Party claiming that these distinguished men were lying about the ugly incident), from gun owners openly parading firearms outside buildings where President Obama was speaking to racist diatribes published on Websites of White supremacists and their militias, the hate directed against Blacks, against immigrants, and against the United States government, itself, is palpable.

To the extent that the Tea Party cannot meaningfully change the values of its membership, the movement has yet to demonstrate its fitness to assume national power, given that it has not yet summoned the courage to openly embrace its character.

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