



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on August 16, 2011

## Tea Partier Confronts Obama Over Remark Made by Biden

Tea Party activist Ryan Rhodes confronted President Obama publicly at a town hall meeting in Iowa and demanded to know whether or not Vice President Joe Biden did in fact call Tea Partiers “terrorists” during the debt ceiling debate. Reports indicate that Obama did engage in a “heated back and forth” with the activist but refused to directly answer the question.



On August 1, Vice President Joe Biden and a number of other House Democrats issued a verbal lashing to Tea Party Republicans, [accusing](#) them of having “acted like terrorists” in the fight over the debt ceiling.

According to *Politico*, Biden was “agreeing with a line of argument made by Rep. Mike Doyle,” who said, “We have negotiated with terrorists. This small group of terrorists have made it impossible to spend any money.” Biden later made a similar statement, “They have acted like terrorists.”

The remarks made by both Doyle and Biden took place during a two-hour, closed-door Democratic Caucus meeting.

While the Vice President’s office initially declined to comment on the remarks, Biden’s spokeswoman Kendra Barkoff eventually admitted, “The word was used by several members of Congress. The vice president does not believe it’s an appropriate term in political discourse.”

Biden again denied using the term during an interview with CBS. “I did not use the terrorism word,” he told Scott Pelley, CBS Evening News anchor.

But Biden has garnered a reputation for misspeaking on more than one occasion. For example, prior to the CBS News interview, he told Senate Democrats that Republican leaders have “guns to their heads” over the debt ceiling debate.

Likewise, as [noted](#) by Gretawire, “Some Democrats familiar with the meeting said at the time that Biden had appeared to agree with the sentiment expressed by Doyle and others as a way of moving the conversation along and convincing Democrats to support the final compromise.”

For some, the issue is not dead until real clarification is made. That is why the Tea Partier confronted President Obama at the end of the town hall meeting yesterday. Gretawire reports, “In public, Obama did not directly answer the question from Rhodes about Biden. But Obama fired back that he knows better than anyone what it’s like to be slammed for his political views and was not about to accept a lecture on the topic.”

“As someone who’s been called a socialist, not born here, taking away freedoms for providing health care, I’m all for lowering the rhetoric,” Obama said.

However, Obama was visibly disgruntled by the manner in which he was confronted, as Rhodes stood up and screamed questions at him, asserting that the President was ignoring him.



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"Sir, hold on a second," said Obama. "I know it's not going to work if you just stand up when I asked everybody to raise their hand. I didn't see you. I wasn't avoiding you."

Obama instead opted to discuss the matter with Rhodes, founder of the Iowa Tea Party, after the event. The two were seen engaged in a lively discussion a few moments later, wherein Obama denied that Biden had made the comment.

In an interview with Fox News, Rhodes explained, "He just denied it, he said the Vice President didn't make any of those assertions. He just doesn't want to even admit what was on TV nationally — all over the place — then how can you have a conversation?"

Rhodes claims that Obama virtually brushed him off, asserting that the statements made by Biden were misunderstood and that so long as Rhodes believed Biden used the word "terrorist," he and the President could not put the issue to rest.

"Then he said 'we can't have a conversation because you're saying I called you a terrorist,'" recalled Rhodes. "The fact is it demonstrates the deep divide that he is unwilling to negotiate without going after the other side. The whole day was about going after Republicans and talking about how unreasonable they are."

Some in the crowd at the town hall meeting disapproved of the way Rhodes handled his meeting with the President. One woman confronted Rhodes and said he was "extraordinarily rude." But Rhodes is content having not backed down. He told the woman, "I said my piece."

Rhodes contends that he is frustrated with the President's rhetoric about civility, when members of his own party are guilty of violating that very principle.

"He seemed to keep attacking the other side. I wanted to know why he was talking about civility when I'm being accused of being a terrorist," declared Rhodes.

*Photo: Ryan Rhodes, right, of the Iowa Tea Party Revolution, speaks to President Barack Obama at a town hall meeting, Aug. 15, 2011, in Decorah, Iowa.; AP Images*



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