



Written by on October 25, 2010

Tea Party Group Plans to Keep Pressure on Newly Elected Congressmen

A report published by the Wall Street Journal on October 25 revealed details of an internal memorandum written by leaders of Tea Party Patriots, to maintain pressure on new members of Congress after Election Day.



[Tea Party Patriots, Inc](#), an umbrella group that serves as a central information site for nearly 3,000 local groups across the country and describes itself as a non-partisan grassroots organization of individuals united by our core values derived from the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States of America, the Bill Of Rights as explained in the *Federalist Papers*. The groups mission statement, as posted on its website, is “to attract, educate, organize, and mobilize our fellow citizens to secure public policy consistent with our three core values of Fiscal Responsibility, Constitutionally Limited Government and Free Markets.”

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Mark Meckler, co-founder of the Tea Party Patriots, said in an interview quoted by the *Journal*: “The incumbents have allowed us to get into the problems we are in now. We hope to get to the freshmen before the incumbents get to them, and start twisting their arms.”

Mecklers concerns were fueled, in part, by comments about tea-party candidates made by the former Republican Senate majority leader, Trent Lott, quoted in an interview with the *Washington Post* last July: “As soon as [the Tea Party candidates] get here, we need to co-opt them.”

Tea Party Patriot leaders said they are also preparing to fight Democratic efforts to pass legislation during the lame-duck session of Congress expected to take place between the election and when the next Congress is seated in January.

The Tea Party memo also outlined the groups plans to hold what it describes as a summit of newly elected members of Congress early in 2011 designed to keep new Representatives informed about “what we expect from them. Meckler said in his *Journal* interview that neither incumbent Republican members of Congress nor the GOPs national leadership would be invited to the meeting.

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Taken at face value, the Tea Party Patriot groups objectives seem worthwhile. Why not provide those elected to Congress with Tea Party support with a set of expectations as well as a few warnings about what to expect from the old boy network of congressional leaders?

However, one wonders how such a loose affiliation of groups hope to outmaneuver the political machinations of a well-entrenched major political party. The organizations decision to paint all incumbents with one brush and exclude incumbents from their early summit might also be counterproductive. Why deprive those incoming freshman attending of sage advice offered by such constitutionalist veterans of Congress as Representatives Ron Paul (R-Texas), Paul Broun (R-Ga.), or Virginia Foxx (R-N.C.)?

In taking this mammoth task upon itself, the Tea Partiers are treading upon much of the same ground worked by members of The John Birch Society for more than 50 years. In her article, [The Tea Party and The John Birch Society](#), Raven Clabough noted that liberal bloggers have noted some similarity between the two organizations and have lamented that The Tea Party movement’s ideals are an extension of those held by The John Birch Society.

However, points out Clabough:

But while Tea Partiers could be viewed as relative newcomers in raising concerns that John Birchers have raised for decades, there are also differences which Crooks and Liars [a blog] fails to address between Birch beliefs and the views of many Tea Partiers. For example, the GOPs Pledge to America, is viewed favorably by eight out of 10 Tea Partiers according to the Bloomberg survey but was the subject of a critical article in the JBS-affiliated publication *The New American*. As noted by Charles Scaliger in “Promises, Promises: A Pledge to America,” the Pledge proposes nothing of substance to subdue welfarism, foreign interventionism, and inflation despite its rhetoric in support of the Constitution.

While the Tea Partys stated goals of fiscal responsibility, constitutionally limited government, and free markets (provided they are *true* free markets and not false free markets dictated by multinational trade agreements) and those of The John Birch Society are well in sync, the tendency of most Tea Party followers to surrender to the lure of the neoconservative Republicans Pledge to America siren song indicates a deficiency of sorts. If Tea Partiers truly want to distance newly elected Representatives from the tainted policies prevailing among incumbent Republicans, why not distance themselves from the forerunners of those incumbents, such as former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, a major architect of the pledge?

If the Tea Party seeks to continue monitoring Congress after the elections and to keep pressure on our representatives to vote according to the Constitution, they will find excellent company among JBS members and other readers of *The New American* magazine, which publishes four [Freedom Index](#) reports rating each Representative and Senator according to how he or she votes, based on the U.S. Constitution.

May we suggest that the Tea Party Patriot leaders invite each Representative and Senator who scored [100 percent on the Freedom Index](#) to their summit of incoming congressional freshmen, so the veteran constitutionalists can mentor these political novices on how to do the job right?

Photo: Tea Party Patriots National founders and coordinators Mark Meckler and Jenny Beth Martin (out of picture) take part in a news conference at the National Press Club in Washington, Sept. 21, 2010: AP Images



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