



## The Tea Party and The John Birch Society

According to John Amato, founder of the Crooks and Liars blog, a Bloomberg poll confirms a notion that readers of The New American may celebrate but left-wing media outlets such as Crooks and Liars lament: The Tea Party movement's ideals are an extension of those held by The John Birch Society. The not-so-happy liberal blogger wrote, "A new Bloomberg poll on the Tea Party movement confirms ... Tea Party activists are an extension of the most extreme, far-right John Birch Society values, with the added bonus of funding from the corporate right."



[According to Bloomberg](#), Respondents who identify with the Tea Party are almost unanimous in saying it stands for lower taxes, smaller government and personal responsibility. The Bloomberg poll also found:

"Four of five Tea Party supporters who say they plan to vote in the November congressional elections will back Republicans, even though one-third describe themselves as independents."

"More than six in 10 say [the Tea Party] advocates government based on Christian principles."

"Eight of 10 Tea Party voters back the 'Pledge to America.' "

"Six out of 10 Tea Party supporters who plan to vote say they want to overhaul or abolish the Fed."

"Almost seven in 10 Tea Party advocates say they would be less likely to support a candidate who voted for the bank rescue or the auto bailout."

"Half of the Tea Party voters consider the federal debt estimated at \$1.3 trillion in fiscal 2010 by the Congressional Budget Office to be the most important issue facing the country."

"An overwhelming majority say they want a repeal of the health-care law championed by President Barack Obama."

"Almost nine of 10 of the movements backers disapprove of the job the president is doing."

Crooks and Liars examined the poll data specifically Tea Party's disdain for the Federal Reserve, the federal deficit, and the nanny state and determined it to prove that conservatives and Tea Partiers are influenced by The John Birch Society.

It is, of course, true that Tea Partiers are now trumpeting themes that John Birchers have been talking about for decades. Consider these warnings that Robert Welch made when he founded The John Birch Society in 1958, more than half a century prior to the launch of the Tea Party:

"Greatly expanded government spending, for missiles, for so-called defense generally, for foreign aid, for every conceivable means of getting rid of ever larger sums of American money as wastefully as possible."



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on October 24, 2010

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“Higher and then much higher taxes.”

“An increasingly unbalanced budget, despite the higher taxes.”

“Wild inflation of our currency, leading rapidly towards its ultimate repudiation.”

“Government controls of prices, wages, and materials, supposedly to combat inflation.”

“Greatly increased socialistic controls over every operation of our economy and every activity of our daily lives. This is to be accompanied, naturally and automatically, by a correspondingly huge increase in the size of our bureaucracy, and in both the cost and reach of our domestic government.”

“Far more centralization of power in Washington, and the practical elimination of our state lines.”

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 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.

By focusing on similarities rather than disparities, Crooks and Liars intended to besmirch Tea Partiers by comparing them to the supposedly bad Birchers. Ironically, their attempt to smear the Tea Party movement by applying the Birch label will cause many Tea Partiers and others to recognize that the Birchers were ahead of the curve in warning about the dangers of Big Government and to ask, “What’s wrong with The John Birch Society anyway?”

(To find out more about The John Birch Society, [click here](#).)



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