

## Karl Rove: The tea party is “not sophisticated” compared to the Reagan Revolution

posted at 7:12 pm on October 19, 2010 by Allahpundit

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For some reason, [this story](#) made me think of that Politico poll this morning showing widespread skepticism about the tea party [among Washington “insiders.”](#) *I wonder why.*

Seriously, though, with one small exception I think the outrageous outrage about what he said here is overblown. Some people will grumble about it anyway, partly due to lingering resentment over his criticisms of O’Donnell a few weeks ago, but I don’t think he means to be insulting. The gist of what he’s saying is that (a) there are a lot of political newbies in the tea-party movement, which is true, (b) the tea-party movement is notably decentralized, which is also true, and (c) virtually all political movements, including the Civil Rights movement, expect instant change even though politics is more complicated than that. It’s not that tea partiers are “not sophisticated” in the sense that lefty bloggers are, ahem, “not sophisticated” [about American history](#), it’s that they’re not sophisticated when it comes to building well-oiled political organizations. They’re *getting there* to be sure, but you don’t go from 0 to 90 overnight.

SPIEGEL: Are you convinced, then, that the Republican Party will be able to integrate the Tea Party without drifting too far to the right?

Rove: Sure. There have been movements like this before — the Civil Rights movement, the anti-war movement, the pro-life movement, the Second Amendment rights movement. All of them popped up, insistent, loud, and relatively unsophisticated. They wanted everything now and for politicians to be with them 100 percent of the time. And after an election or two, people wake up saying, our system produces mostly incremental progress and takes time and compromise. That’s exactly what’s going to happen here. I meet a lot of Tea Partiers as I go around the country, and they are amazing people. Most have never been involved in politics before. This is their first experience, and they have the enthusiasm of people who have never done it before.

SPIEGEL: Is the Tea Party movement a repeat of the Reagan Revolution?

Rove: It’s a little bit different because the Reagan Revolution was driven a lot by the persona of one man, Ronald Reagan, who had an optimistic and sunny view of what the nation could be. It was also a well-organized, coherent, ideologically motivated and conservative revolution. If you look underneath the surface of the Tea Party movement, on the other hand, you will find that it is not sophisticated. **It’s not like these people have read the economist Friedrich August von Hayek.** Rather, these are people who are deeply concerned about what they see happening to their country, particularly when it comes to spending, deficits, debt and health care.

Read the whole interview, as he goes on to defend O’Donnell (er, sort of), calls Obama a centrist only by the standards of European social democracy, and reminds the interviewer that The One wasn’t the only president in recent memory to have his legitimacy questioned by the other party. I don’t know what he’s talking about, though, when he says tea partiers haven’t read Hayek — didn’t they help make “The Road to Serfdom” a [bestseller](#) a few months ago after Glenn Beck touted it on his show? — and it’s bizarre that he’d describe the Reagan Revolution as “ideologically motivated and conservative” but not the tea party. I *think* what he means is that Reaganism was more about a comprehensive conservative policy platform, including social conservatism, whereas the tea party is chiefly (but not entirely) a response to the looming fiscal crisis caused by debt, entitlements, pension obligations, and so forth. In other words, the tea party is a tad narrower in scope

(but [maybe not](#) for [much longer](#)). Argue with that if you like, but I don't think he means it as an insult.

**Update:** Actually, maybe his point about Hayek is that there aren't many tea partiers who have read Hayek's more nuts-and-bolts economic pieces, only the broader big-think stuff like “Serfdom.” That is to say, whereas the Reagan Revolution had a stable of think-tank eggheads ready to roll out policy ideas, the tea party thus far is an almost entirely grassroots populist phenomenon. I'm not sure that he's right — the good folks at the Cato Institute would happily lend a hand in a tea-party administration, I assume — but that's his claim.



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No nuance...no need to be “sophisticated”...**we just can't abide BS**...and we'll call it out whenever and wherever we see it!!!

Word to Karl: ***Follow us or get out of the way!!!!***...Otherwise, you'll find our footprints all over your suit and tie!

landlines on October 19, 2010 at [9:45 PM](#)

Allah, I was willing to go along with you and cut him some slack until the Hayek comment. F\*ck you, Rove: you're playing along with the media narrative because you don't want to be seen as stupid. Remember, Bush was an idiot, but Rove was always the evil genius who ran things. That's quite a coveted status that he won't give up lightly.

So I reject your attempt to get back in my good graces, sir. You showed your colors with the O'Donnell bashing (and again, it's not that he disapproved of her, it's that he did so without discretion, in an excessively