

Alexander's Essay – June 24, 2010

The 'Tea Party' Movement

What it is -- and isn't.

"The people of the U.S. owe their Independence & their liberty, to the wisdom of desecrating in the minute tax of 3 pence on tea, the magnitude of the evil comprised in the precedent. Let them exert the same wisdom, in watching against every evil lurking under plausible disguises, and growing up from small beginnings." --James Madison



Left v Right

As we prepare to observe Independence Day, it is fitting that we pause to consider the origins of the American Revolution and the liberty it enshrined for generations since.

As James Madison aptly notes, it all began with an act of civil disobedience in rejection of a tax on tea -- a Tea Party.

On December 16th, 1773, "radicals" from Boston, members of a secret organization of American Patriots called the Sons of Liberty, boarded three East India Company ships and threw 342 chests of tea into Boston Harbor.

This iconic event, in protest of oppressive British taxation and tyrannical rule, became known as the Boston Tea Party.

Resistance to the Crown had been mounting over enforcement of the 1764 Sugar Act, 1765 Stamp Act and 1767 Townshend Act, which led to the Boston Massacre and gave rise to the slogan, "No taxation without representation."

The 1773 Tea Act and resulting Tea Party protest galvanized the Colonial movement opposing British parliamentary acts, which violated the natural, charter and constitutional rights of the colonists.

In response to the rebellion, the British enacted additional punitive measures, labeled the "Intolerable Acts," in hopes of suppressing the burgeoning insurrection. Far from accomplishing their desired outcome, however, the Crown's countermeasures led colonists to convene the First Continental Congress on September 5th, 1774, in Philadelphia -- the first step toward formalizing a declaration of liberty.

Today, once again, we find ourselves subject to unjust taxation. And while we enjoy a token and technical representation in Congress, we are continually being taxed for purposes not expressly authorized by our Constitution. That tax burden is levied to satiate contemporaneous political constituencies, but at an ever-increasing cost under which free enterprise will, ultimately, collapse.

As a result of this abject violation of constitutional Rule of Law, greatly amplified by the current Leftist administration of Barack Hussein Obama, American Patriots have, once again, mustered a Tea Party movement, which is growing in strength. This movement is not about [revolution but restoration](#), at its core -- advancing any and all measures to restore Rule of Law.

Despite the best efforts of Beltway Republican establishment types, Libertarians and conservative special interest groups endeavoring to co-opt the Tea Party for their own purposes, these Patriots have shown remarkable devotion to their guiding principles, rejecting any and all suitors attempting to commandeer the movement.

So, just what is the Tea Party?

Let me first answer that question by describing *who* it is.

We are American Patriots, defenders of [First Principles](#) and [Essential Liberty](#).

We are Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, Coast Guardsmen and public servants standing in harm's way at home and around the world, who are loyal, first and foremost, to our revered oath to "[support and defend](#)" our Constitution.

We are grassroots leaders and local, state and national officeholders who, likewise, honor our sacred oath.

We are mothers, fathers and other family members nurturing the next generation of young Patriots. We are farmers, craftsmen, tradesmen and industrial producers. We are small business owners, service providers and professionals in medicine and law. We are employees and employers. We are in ministry at home and missionaries abroad. We are students and professors at colleges and universities, often standing alone for what is good and right.

We are consumers and taxpayers. We are voters.

We are Patriot sons and daughters from all walks of life, heirs to the blessings of Liberty bequeathed to us at great personal cost by our Patriot forebears, confirmed in the opinion that it is our duty to God and Country to extend that blessing to *our* posterity, and avowed upon our sacred honor to that end. We are vigilant, strong, prepared and faithful.

We are not defined by race, creed, ethnicity, religion, wealth, education or political affiliation, but by our devotion to our Creator, and the liberty He has entrusted to us, one and all.

Second, the Tea Party is *not* a political party, per se, organized around a national platform. However, grassroots Tea Party groups across the nation do have a well-defined and uniform slate of principles on which they center their advocacy and support for political candidates.

Those principles include, first and foremost, advocating for Essential Liberty, the restoration of constitutional limits on government and the judiciary, and the promotion of free enterprise, national defense and traditional American values.

If this sounds familiar, it's because this is, and has been, the mission statement of [The Patriot Post](#) since our inception.

These core principles have been expanded in a more formal statement, the "[Contract from America](#)", which closely parallels the original Tea Party manifesto, [The Patriot Declaration](#), which I encourage you to both [read and sign](#).



[Patriot Declaration](#)

[The Patriot Declaration](#) is based on the rights enumerated in our [First Statement of Conservative Principles](#), our Declaration of Independence and its subordinate guidance, our Constitution.

Today, those who support the Tea Party principles understand, as did our Founders, that [the power to tax](#) is the most invasive threat to liberty and its economic expression, free enterprise.

As Chief Justice John Marshall concluded in 1819 (*McCullough v. Maryland*), "An unlimited power to tax involves, necessarily, a power to destroy; because there is a limit beyond which no institution and no property can bear taxation."

Alexander Hamilton detailed the economic consequences of excessive taxation, noting in *Federalist No. 21*, "If duties are too high, they lessen the consumption; the collection is eluded; and the product to the treasury is not so great as when they are confined within proper and moderate bounds."

Thomas Jefferson wrote, "To take from one, because it is thought his own industry and that of his fathers has acquired too much, in order to spare to others, who, or whose fathers, have not exercised equal

industry and skill, is to violate arbitrarily the first principle of association, the guarantee to everyone the free exercise of his industry and the fruits acquired by it."

Because of the menacing threat of excessive taxation, Jefferson suggested that taxes "should be continued by annual or biennial reenactments, because a constant hold, by the nation, of the strings of the public purse is a salutary restraint from which an honest government ought not wish, nor a corrupt one to be permitted, to be free," and ultimately, that "excessive taxation ... will carry reason and reflection to every man's door, and particularly in the hour of election."

Indeed, if American Patriots, who inherently subscribe to Tea Party principles, can adequately rally enough of our fellow citizens to our enlightened cause to restore Rule of Law, then it will be possible to reset our nation's course and re-establish our Constitution's integrity. However, it will take more than one election cycle to undo decades of Democrat socialism and more recently, Republican malfeasance.

But if Liberty, as affirmed at our nation's birth, is to survive another generation, we *must* reinstate Rule of Law. It will take tireless devotion and forbearance to do so peacefully, but it is my fervent prayer that restoration can succeed without firing a shot. Still, the history of throwing off tyrannical governments, as with the founding of our great nation, is not on the side of peaceful rebellion.

One of the great strengths of the grassroots Tea Party movement is its lack of any central organization, which would be subject to corruption. But that lack of central organization can also be its weakness. If the movement fails to unite behind the tactics required for restoration of constitutional integrity and the Rule of Law, it risks devolving into a plethora of special interest constituencies which will be easily defeated, or at best, will have no more power than the para-political organizations that vie for their allegiance.

As Benjamin Franklin said famously when signing the Declaration of Independence, "We must, indeed, all hang together, or most assuredly we will all hang separately."

We derive great strength in forming a unified Patriot Tea Party front to support and defend our Constitution as our primary objective. We must refuse to waste our political capital on policy arguments, and must, instead, frame every debate around [First Principles](#) and [Essential Liberty](#).

There is an excellent tool, a Tea Party "bible" of sorts, available as the foundational resource for our movement. It is the pocket-sized "[Essential Liberty Guide](#)", a resource which no Patriot should be without.

Thomas Jefferson once declared, "Honor, justice, and humanity, forbid us tamely to surrender that freedom which we received from our gallant ancestors, and which our innocent posterity have a right to receive from us. We cannot endure the infamy and guilt of resigning succeeding generations to that wretchedness which inevitably awaits them if we basely entail hereditary bondage on them."

Indeed, but too many Americans have become complacent in comfort, unable or unwilling to comprehend that the consequences of foregoing Liberty for refuge are dire. As Franklin wrote, "They that can give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety."

Barack Obama has disparaged Tea Party Patriots, portraying us as a gang of malcontents "waving their little teabags." Such undignified characterizations notwithstanding, Obama and his Leftist cadres are clearly concerned that an enlightened grassroots movement to restore Rule of Law will undermine their Socialist agenda in the upcoming midterm election.

My fellow Patriots, stand fast for Essential Liberty, stay the course, hold your ground and keep your powder dry. Real "change" is on the horizon.

Semper Vigilo, Fortis, Paratus et Fidelis!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Alexander', with a stylized, cursive script.

Mark Alexander
Publisher, [*The Patriot Post*](#)