

Racist Elements

☒ Typically, when a politician or media personality starts receiving heat for publicly stating that the Tea Party is a racist movement, they fall back to a common argument. That argument usually sounds something like this: “Well, they’re not ALL racists, but there are racist elements within their ranks”.

Most recently, it was Democratic Congressman Andre Carson of Indiana who went through the motions. Last Monday, he told a gathering of supporters that the Tea Party movement would like to see black people “hanging on a tree”. Two days later, Carson clarified his remarks for CNN stating, “I am deeply concerned about some elements of the tea party who are extremist...”

Last year, the NAACP even adopted a highly-publicized resolution that specifically condemned “racist elements” within the Tea Party movement.

This raises an obvious question: What exactly is a “racist element”?

In the context of how most people are using the term, it seems to be a way of applying the morally repugnant charge of racism to a group of people without having to actually offer any proof that the foundation of the group supports or promotes racism. If a racist is a member of the group, that group has “racist elements”.

This of course would mean that if you’re ever attending a concert, and you hear someone in the audience yell a racial slur, you’re suddenly part of a group that has “racist elements”. Congratulations!

Now to me, this sounds an awful lot like Guilt By Association, which liberals repeatedly told us in 2008 was completely and

utterly unfair to then presidential candidate, Barack Obama. Isn't it fascinating that the same people who are now complaining about racist elements in the Tea Party were tight-lipped when it came to the indisputable racist elements within Reverend Jeremiah Wright's church, of which Obama was a member? Congressman Andre Carson himself didn't seem to have a contempt for "racist elements" when he endorsed parishioner Barack Obama for the presidency during the height of the Wright controversy.

What's the difference here? Why is it a problem when the racist elements are a couple of idiots who show up at a rally waving objectionable signs, but not when the racist elements are the leaders of the group who are spewing racism to an applauding congregation?

The unfortunate reality these days is that the accusation of racism is rarely a legitimate condemnation of vile, racial discrimination. Today, it's most often used as a tool to silence and discredit opposing viewpoints. It pains me to reach such a conclusion because genuine racism is a very serious issue that deserves attention, but with accusations of racism thrown around like candy at a parade, the charge is meaningless.

Sadly, as many have pointed out, our country as a whole has historically had a racist element to it. Though continually shrinking over time, it might always be with us.

What I'd like to see is a larger "shame element" in our society, where more people condemn those who trivialize the issue of racism for their personal attention and gain. I tend to believe that growth in this element would work towards diminishing the other.

One can hope.