



What Tea Party Supporters Should Know About Free Trade

Posted By [Bryan Riley](#) on January 30, 2014

According to a recent report from Politico Pro's Eric Bradner: "Tea party groups launched an effort today to thwart President Barack Obama's free trade efforts, which they've dubbed 'Obamatrade.'"

Tea Party supporters surely know that the historic Boston Tea Party was a protest against [duties](#)^[2] on imported tea. They are also likely to recall that the Declaration of Independence specifically [cited](#)^[3] England's trade restrictions as a reason to declare independence. As Constitutionalists, there's a good chance they understand that the U.S. Constitution in effect [created](#)^[4] a free trade area among the states that made it possible for our country to prosper.

Tea Party supporters and other supporters of the Constitution's "takings clause," which says the U.S. government cannot seize private property without providing compensation, should know that trade agreements [expand](#)^[5] this right internationally by denying foreign governments the ability to seize the property of U.S. citizens without providing compensation. In addition, U.S. trade agreements provide for neutral panels to judge trade and investment disputes, protecting Americans from the whims of corrupt foreign legal systems.

U.S. trade barriers reward groups for their political clout and represent the type of influence peddling that Tea Party members adamantly oppose. Like the patriots in Boston, today's Tea Party members should be prepared to dump trade restrictions that benefit politically connected insiders and make Americans poorer and less free.