

THINGS REPUBLICANS THINK MERIT INVESTIGATION MORE THAN TORTURE: ACORN

Given how frothy Republicans have gotten about the White House gate-crashers, I thought it'd be worth starting a catalog of things the Republicans think merit investigations more than torture.

Today's edition: ACORN.

The eight Republican members of Congress who showed up for the hearing didn't disappoint. With one exception, they labeled ACORN a "criminal enterprise" with close and current ties to the highest levels of the Obama administration and the labor movement. "President Obama previously served as ACORN's lawyer, participated in ACORN training sessions in Chicago, and presided on the board of two organizations that funded ACORN's Chicago chapter," said [Lamar] Smith. An old picture of Obama in an ACORN office was posted near the hearing stand to bolster his point. "The president's ties with ACORN taint any conclusions the Department of Justice may reach with regard to whether or not to investigate ACORN employees. **That's why I've requested that the attorney general appoint a special prosecutor to investigate ACORN.**"

To bolster their case, Republicans produced 81 pages of documents about ACORN's voter registration activities in 2004 and 2006 – a supplement to Issa's 99-page July 2009 report, "Is ACORN Intentionally Structured As a Criminal Enterprise?"

The 81 new pages, helpfully highlighted by staffers, put ACORN staffers on the record planning voter registration drives and campaigns for “progressive” candidates. They also touched on the organization’s social work – **“within the next year Maryland ACORN will conduct 500 new lead tests for low and moderate-income renters and homeowners”** – but members and witnesses argued that the organization’s political activity, clearly benefiting Democrats and President Obama, was at least reason to strip it of tax-exempt status.

“The current admin is becoming, in reality, the war room for ACORN’s political machine,” said Issa. “The poor will be better served when ACORN is no longer a go-to place for services.” [my emphasis]

Lamar Smith thinks providing lead tests for low income people is more threatening to this country than torture.