



CAPITAL RESEARCH

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE SOROS FOUNDATION AFTER SOROS? PAGE 6

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Dissenting
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No Safe Spaces, a documentary starring Adam Carolla and Dennis Prager and co-financed by CRC's own Dangerous Documentaries, will expose the safe space culture that is undermining American universities. *No Safe Spaces* will expose the sad state of free speech, the unwillingness of students to be challenged by new ideas, and "the grievance culture" of "safe spaces" that are undermining the intellectual foundations of American higher education.

Carolla—a well-known stand-up comedian, podcaster, and radio personality—and Prager—a syndicated radio talk show host who has been on the air for more than four decades—will travel to college campuses across the country interviewing students, professors, and commentators from both sides of the political spectrum.

No Safe Spaces is set to release in 2018. It will be directed by Justin Folk and produced by Mark Joseph. Scott Walter and Jake Klein are executive producers.

NOsafespaces.com

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THE INSIDER'S TALE

Why a former union leader now supports right to work laws

By Ben Johnson

Summary: *A former state president of the AFL-CIO and the teachers' union explains why he's for the Right to Work and adamantly opposed to the mandatory collection of union dues from non-union members. This common practice—one that is fundamentally anti-American—will soon be reviewed by the U.S. Supreme Court, where it has a good chance of getting shot down. Until then, the odious practice continues.*

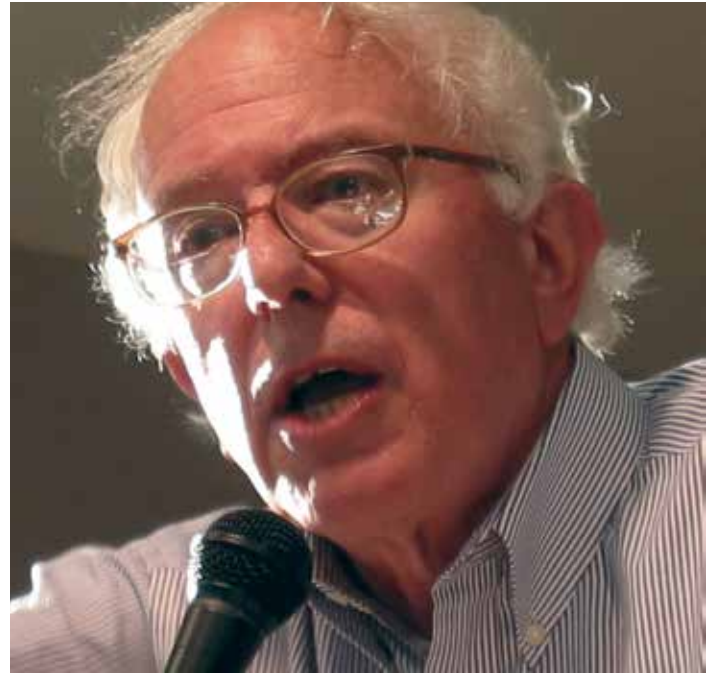
I spent the last decade as treasurer, then president of AFT Vermont (the state affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers). For three of those years, I served as president of the Vermont AFL-CIO.

Surprising to some, perhaps, I now support Right to Work nationwide. My passionate support for this critical concept encompasses the private sector, the public sector, and any other sectors that unions might hope to create. Full stop. It's time to get rid of unions' power to collect mandatory agency fees from non-members.

The national Right to Work bill, currently before Congress, would eliminate that practice in the private sector. Meanwhile, the U.S. Supreme Court this term will soon hear a case, *Janus vs. AFSCME*, that could eliminate the practice in the public sector.

My home state of Vermont is Bernie Sanders country, where cows outnumber people and radical leftist sects seem to outnumber both. I ran against opposition in nearly all of my elections with a platform comprising only two planks: 1) organize more workers into the union; 2) always make the union stronger.

For almost ten years I spoke union words, thought union thoughts, and fought union fights. But that pitiless era taught me a Manichean worldview. I saw life only in terms of power; who had it, who wanted it, and what people with power could do to those without. Unions inhabit a hostile Hobbesian wilderness, both in politics and the workplace. Now I know the truth: unions create the wilderness wherever they go, then marvel that they never find their way out to the Promised Land.



Credit: Don Shall. License: <https://goo.gl/h38ruh>.

My home state of Vermont is Bernie Sanders country, where cows outnumber people and radical leftist sects seem to outnumber both.

My current views represent complete apostasy—indeed, blasphemy—coming from a former union president. Given that my about-face might seem incomprehensible to some, I'd like to share my intellectual growth process by walking you past three different kinds of train wrecks created by agency fees that I witnessed first-hand.

First, we'll examine the normal situation in which agency fees occur; common practice in local unions all across the country and the sort of example with which union attorneys pad out their Supreme Court briefs. Then we'll look at the

Ben Johnson is a former president of the Vermont AFL-CIO and the Vermont affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers.



Credit: SEIU Local 99. License: <https://goo.gl/vzuZZF>

Nearly every union contract covers all the employees in related jobs, called the “bargaining unit,” whether they are members of the union or not.

surprising role fees played in our childcare campaign here in Vermont. Finally, we’ll cast a cold eye on the outrageous way SEIU (Service Employees International Union) rode free on the backs of non-members in California.

Free Riders?

When a union successfully organizes a group of employees, the race to bargain a first contract begins.

Nearly every union contract covers all the employees in related jobs, called the “bargaining unit,” whether they are members of the union or not. The right to bargain for all the workers carries with it the duty to represent them all. Unions argue this special duty imposes a heavy burden on the union in terms of staff time, legal advice, and so forth. Typically, union staff working on the all-important first contract wins the right to collect a fee from non-members in the bargaining unit, in order to offset that administrative burden.

On its face, there is something screwy about the idea that an employer can take money from your paycheck against your will and give it to a private third party that you may want nothing to do with, and whose very existence you may oppose on philosophical, moral, financial, or strategic grounds. It feels patently unjust, not to mention un-American.

But for 40 years, the Supreme Court has stuck by its 1977 *Abood* decision giving public sector unions the right to collect these fees. The Court found then that the danger of free riders outweighs the forced association and forced speech

suffered by the non-members. Unions successfully argue that the dictates of fairness should impel non-member free riders pay their share.

Well, I don’t remember meeting any free riders who refuse unionization just to save a buck. I have, however, talked to plenty of people who despised the union they were forced to support, who wanted nothing to do with it, or who sullenly put up with union hegemony because there was no real alternative, like the sad inhabitants of a totalitarian, one-party state. I’ve met plenty of these folks—disgusted, disappointed, whose rights have been infringed. But I haven’t met a single one of the mythical characters union lawyers talk about in court: that is those fantastic beasts who benefit from all the advantages union membership can confer but chuckle into their hands over the great deal they get without paying full price. I suspect these scary, amoral creatures exist mainly in pro-union fairy tales, told to scare labor law judges so they’ll uphold unions’ inalienable right to collect forced fees.

But, let’s assume for a moment that such scary free-riders do exist. There’s a missing factor from this equation, as calculated by the unions, a dirty little secret: Unions choose to bargain contracts that cover the entire bargaining unit, members or not.

That’s right: No union is required to represent a single so-called free rider!



Here’s their dirty little secret:

Unions choose to bargain contracts that cover the entire bargaining unit, members or not.

Unions could bargain members-only contracts and leave non-members to fend for themselves. They could easily relinquish the obligation to represent all those free-loading non-members that they find such a burden. Instead, unions fight for the right to cover the whole bargaining unit, then make non-members pay for a privilege they didn’t want in the first place. That’s fairness the union way, the way I practiced it once upon a time.

But think about it: What business would turn down an absolute monopoly in the marketplace, particularly one in which it can then insist upon provisions which make everyone a forced customer?

If a union wins the bloody war of attrition that characterizes most organizing drives, then goes on to administer a first contract covering the whole bargaining unit and includes agency fees—then that’s the whole ballgame. It needs not respond to complaints or criticisms, or suggestions for improvements; it only needs to be about as responsive to its members as the state-owned department store in Novosibirsk, USSR, in 1958.

Yes, a free market is a cruel place, one that doesn’t coddle revolutionary daydreamers. Much better for unions to stay out of it. Right?

Unions fear a members-only contract because it might kick off a bidding war between the employer and the union, a war in which the employer might be able to wean workers off the union teat by offering non-members greater pay or benefits. Presumably, the union would then up its game and push the employer to pay union members even more, leveraging the collective power of its membership for the good of all. But in the union nightmare, employers eventually offer employees so much to de-unionize that the union itself withers and dies. Of course, given the alleged centrality of “democracy” as a core union value, I find it hard to see that particular outcome as tragic. If there is no one left to cast a vote in the union hall, well, the people have spoken.

Unionizing Childcare

In 2009, we started a project in Vermont to organize childcare workers. We were following a trail blazed by SEIU and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) in states like Illinois. At that time, thousands of individuals and centers providing childcare in Vermont participated in a program where they were paid a subsidy by the state to provide childcare for low-income families. We wanted to organize them. Our problem was the providers were independent contractors and small business owners, not traditional employees, really, and certainly not employees of the state.

We got a convoluted bit of legislation passed that identified the State of Vermont as their employer; then, poof! like genies out of bottles came thousands of new potential union members in a nice clean bargaining unit.

But creating the thing on paper doesn’t actually create it in flesh and blood. In no real sense were providers connected by anything other than the registry Montpelier that listed their names so the state could pay them.

We union types figured we would never see more than 15 percent of these formerly independent child care



The efforts of SEIU and AFSCME to organize childcare workers led straight into the Supreme Court. In 2013’s Harris v. Quinn, the Court said these agency-fee-based quasi-employment arrangements—transparently bogus—needed to be disregarded.

providers sign up as members. So for our efforts to be successful, we would need agency fees baked in. To fund a single staff person in Vermont dues would need to be set fairly high as a baseline; unions could then collect 85 percent of that in agency fees, in a check cut directly from the state.

If you think this scheme doesn’t have much in common with the normal agency fee case I laid out earlier, you’re exactly right. It uses agency fees as part of a strategy to *build* a union; a concept we knew wouldn’t be supported by a majority of the providers.

Ironically, for most of the five years it took to pass this legislation, unions were regularly accused of creating a plan to get rich off the providers. In truth, the plan would never have done more than just pay for itself. Maybe.

So why did we do it?

The Vermont legislation handed unions a great tool to bring thousands of low income women into the fold. Because these low income women would be covered by the union contract, union political commissars are allowed to communicate with them on political matters. And because each child care provider saw five to six families daily through their childcare businesses, they could theoretically help proselytize union views. Thus they could help unions create a powerhouse political machine that could reach every nook and cranny in the state. (Scoff at an army of nannies at your peril!)

It would have been beautiful. For the unions.

But the SEIU and AFSCME trail led straight into the Supreme Court. In 2013's *Harris v. Quinn*, the Court said these agency-fee-based quasi-employment arrangements, transparently bogus, needed to be disregarded; also unions couldn't strip-mine child-care providers for agency fees.

We lost our election over this issue of unionized childcare workers. The next day, I got a call from an organizer in a different union. They had won a similar election but our union was better off losing, the organizer told me: Yes, they had won, the organizer said, but with only 10 percent membership, and they still had to deal with an unwieldy and dysfunctional system.

Behold, this is the punishment when you build a political strategy on an unstable foundation; on what was supposed to be no more than a fee to cover a few free riders!



*In its 2012 opinion in *Knox v. SEIU*, the Court found that it was unacceptable for the unions to forcibly borrow non-members' money in the name of fair play and use it to fund a campaign many of the latter opposed.*

Political Causes

In California, SEIU Local 1000 represents some 95,000 workers in state government. Back in 2005, the local made members and non-members alike pay a special fee to fund a massive public statewide campaign in opposition to a set of ballot propositions backed by Republican Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

The propositions involved such matters as teacher tenure requirements, the use of union dues for political campaign contributions, state budgetary spending limits, and redistricting. Governor Schwarzenegger claimed they represented necessary corrections to fix the state's problems. This is what he had been elected to do, after all. But all the propositions went down to defeat, a disaster that has set the unfortunate course of California politics to the present day.

Of course, unions took the money for their anti-Schwarzenegger campaign from non-members' paychecks. Later, after the elections they gave the non-members they had fleeced a chance to get their money back. Make no mistake, this was a war chest that had essentially funded the union campaign interest-free. Regarding these controversial ballot questions, I have no doubt that many non-members opposed the union position. But the union decided that a big chunk of their efforts "lobbying the electorate" was an expense chargeable to both members and non-members, a normal part of bargaining the contract.

Once again, the Supreme Court didn't buy that logic. In its 2012 opinion in *Knox v. SEIU*, the Court found that the union overstepped the bounds of the acceptable. Indeed! The idea that unions could forcibly borrow non-members' money in the name of fair play and use it to fund a campaign many of the latter opposed is grotesquely un-American.



In 2005, California unions took the money for their anti-Schwarzenegger campaign from non-members' paychecks.

Unions in the public sector have been increasingly involved in important questions of public policy. As membership organizations with a direct interest in such questions, they are quite right to do so. But these are political questions, root and branch. Participation should be voluntary, available to members alone. Not enforced on non-members.

I don't expect to convince any union officers or staff still wandering the union wilderness that my way is the right way. To them, my arguments are reactionary, tools the forces of capitalism have always used to bust unions. The only analysis that unions countenance support a dire assertion: without bargaining unit contracts and agency fees unions will become terminally weak. A weak union might as well not exist; any arguments against unfair practices is nothing but the buzzing of the saw that cuts down the workers.

Thankfully, I found the right path out of that wilderness. Now I'm free, a private citizen who can say things just because I believe them to be true. And I'm no longer willing to view public life in terms of a bitter power struggle. So here's my heartfelt plea to both those outside the union world and the dedicated rank-and-file members, shop stewards and activists inside it:

I ask you to consider Right to Work and agency fees through a different lens than the union's. The union lens is darkly polarized. It blocks the light from every angle except their own.

In my years as a high-ranking union official, I learned that bargaining unit contracts and agency fees actually weaken the unions they're supposed to strengthen. Such draconian measures are not worth the extra money they bring in. They make strong-arm hoods out of union activists and put unions at war with the people they exist to serve. They garner resentment instead of support. In the name of an abstract and unreal liberation, they do violence to the actual freedom of individual people.

We should acknowledge bargaining unit contracts and forced dues for what they are, subsidies taken by force from people who don't want to join the union. Seriously, mugging

people may not be the best way to lure them to join a union! Here's the truth: if your union is any good, it has nothing to worry about from the Right to Work.

Congress should pass Right to Work legislation for the private sector as soon as possible. The Supreme Court needs to see that it created a monster 40 years ago in the *Abood* decision, and drive a stake through that monster's heart. Disingenuous appeals to fair play and spurious complaints about free riders do not justify the union tyranny many now experience.

CC —————
*Mugging people may not be
the best way to lure them to
join a union!*

Maybe it's time to see if unions can survive on their own in America, by the simple expedient of persuading non-members to join. But maybe those in the higher echelons of the national unions already have a grim suspicion regarding this matter. What if their fears are confirmed and union's collapse under their own weight?

I saw the panic that set in among union leaders after the disastrous oral arguments in *Friedrichs v. CTA* at the Supreme Court last year. Most observers believe that only the death of Antonin Scalia, which left the Court divided 4-4, prevented it from protecting public-sector workers. Now, with Neil Gorsuch in Scalia's place, there's a good chance the Court will move forward again.

If the American labor movement can only survive on artificial life-support—which is to say, on forced dues and bargaining-unit contracts—then it's already dead. But in the end, there's nothing to be feared from the death of an illusion. ■

Read previous articles from the Labor Watch series online at CapitalResearch.org/category/labor-watch/.



WHITHER THE SOROS FOUNDATIONS—AFTER SOROS?

A look at the next generation of the Soros family philanthropists

By Neil Maghami

Summary: Far left mega-donor George Soros—funder of the most powerful groups on the American left, including arms of the Democratic Party, the ACLU, Center for American Progress, and the presidential campaigns of Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama—continues to capture the attention of the center-right. But, given Soros turned 87 in mid-2017, those concerned about the spread of his significant wealth need to look beyond the cult of personality and learn more about the next generation of donors in the family.

The year 2017 will be remembered as a pivotal year for the organizations and foundations orbiting around George Soros. And not just because of Soros's blockbuster October announcement that he was committing a whopping \$18 billion in additional support to his Open Society Foundations. Conservative activist Grover Norquist, with tongue firmly in cheek, wondered if this meant Soros had second thoughts about paying death taxes on his estate.

2017 also provides hints about the potential roles Soros's five children might play in their father's foundations once he passes from the scene. With Soros having turned 87 in August, this leadership question looms ever larger. No one, not even Soros, can live forever.

Last year was a time of change for Soros's Philanthropic Empire. In September came word that Open Society Foundations (OSF) President Christopher Stone would step down at the end of 2017, after 5 years, to make way for Patrick Gaspard. Gaspard is a former Obama Administration Ambassador to South Africa and Service Employees International Union political organizer.

Perhaps most significantly, it was also a year of controversies for Soros. In 2017, for example, questions emerged about the apparently high level of cooperation over the last few years between USAID, an official U.S. government agency, and the Open Society group. There are indications the two have colluded in an effort to meddle in local politics in the tiny country of Macedonia, where the OSF network's efforts have included distribution of a Macedonian-language translation of communist provocateur Saul Alinsky's notorious *Rules for Radicals*.



Credit: Nicolò Caranti. License: <https://goo.gl/L6NUJy>

“What will be missing when I am gone is the entrepreneurial and innovative spirit that characterized the Open Society Foundations.”—George Soros

This edition of *Foundation Watch* will review these and other developments, contextualize them, and attempt to draw insights about the future of the global Soros apparatus. If you weren't paying attention to Soros before, or the outsized role his theatrically huge giving plays in fueling radical movements around the world, he's just given you 18 billion reasons more to care.

The \$18 Billion Gift

The news came in mid-October—George Soros will transfer \$18 billion to his Open Society Foundations, making it the 3rd largest U.S. foundation. Much speculation followed about how the money will be used, what individuals, groups, and causes it will benefit, and so on.

News of Soros's \$18 billion pledge came as a big surprise, but it may have been past and current beneficiaries of his foundations' giving to whom this news was really shocking. Why? Because starting about three years ago, Open Society

Neil Maghami is a freelance writer and regular contributor to CRC publications.

had publicly signaled that it did *not* expect its resources to grow considerably in the future.

In October 2014, OSF president Christopher Stone used a webcast to speak to Open Society grantees (published a month later on OSF's YouTube channel under the title "Webcast on Grant Making with Chris Stone"). About 39 minutes into the webcast, in response to a question from a grantee, Stone says:

We're very lucky in that we have a founder and chairman who made a lot of money in his life. But at about the same time he asked me to take this job, he told everyone in the network that he had retired from moneymaking, and we were now going to have to live within our means—by which he meant his means. The assets of the foundation and of George Soros has [sic] accumulated to put to the cause of Open Society are huge, but they are not limitless—and they are now essentially fixed.

So we are a very large foundation, but we are not growing—and we were growing for many years... and that's a very different reality to work with. It meant that we could build new programs and make new projects without having to stop things we are doing. Today, to start something new, we have to slow up on something else.

Upon review of the six-page summary of OSF's 2016 budget posted to the organization's website, one finds little evidence of the foundation slowing down. OSF disclosed a \$930.7 million total budget for the year but just 58 percent or \$544 million went to grant-making. In addition to various administrative costs, salaries and benefits—which represent about 28 percent of OSF's total budget—\$132 million or 14 percent of the budget is earmarked for "grant-making reserves."

These reserves "are meant to be spent on grants in the calendar year" and are "available to be allocated quickly for unanticipated opportunities," according to the budget summary. "Each use of reserves during the year is approved by the chairman, by the chair of the Global Board's budget committee, by the president, or by the chair of the board of U.S. Programs. All allocations of reserves are reported to the full Global Board at its regular meetings," the document explains.

The document provides other helpful insights into OSF priorities. For example, by total dollar expenditure, the top five focus areas globally for OSF were: "Human Rights & Democratic Practice" (\$142.1 million); "Economic Governance & Advancement" (\$125 million); "Justice Reform & The Rule Of Law" (\$53.3 million); "Economic Governance

& Advancement" (\$41.7 million); and "Health and Rights" (\$35.7 million).

With \$18 billion more in the bank, just imagine how much more "human rights" work OSF can undertake. That's probably more than enough to translate Saul Alinsky's *Rules for Radicals* into the world's most obscure languages—no doubt a major step forward for "human rights" as understood by OSF. There must be remote tribes living in the Amazon jungle, or the mountains of Central Asia, who have not yet been exposed to Alinsky's words.



In 2017, questions emerged about the apparently high level of cooperation over the last few years between USAID, an official U.S. government agency, and the Open Society group.

This compact budget summary points to what observer David Callahan of *Inside Philanthropy* believes will probably be Christopher Stone's main legacy as OSF President: that he brought greater coherence and clarity to a complex internal budget process that involved more than 50 different entities affiliated under the "Open Society Foundations" banner.

This included the creation of a central Strategy Unit, led by Johanna Chao Kreilick, a former assistant to Stone. As described on OSF's website, the office "facilitates the evolution of the Foundations' strategy, budget, and assessment practice, and supervises a team providing strategy and assessment support to the Foundations' 52 programs, foundations, and advocacy offices around the globe."

Stone's efforts created internal friction, some of it rich in irony: Callahan cites OSF's New York and Baltimore staff's June 2016 vote to unionize and join the Communications Workers of America.

In his introduction to *The Philanthropy of George Soros* (published in 2011 by Chuck Sudetic), Soros elaborated on the internal issues that Stone confronted when he began his term as president in 2012:

[a]s I survey my foundations network, I cannot give a proper accounting of the far-reaching and varied activities going on inside because I am not aware of all of them. As I travel around I keep on discovering them, and they are a great source of satisfaction for

me. The activities of which I am not aware are often the best; it is the problematic ones that are brought to my attention. *Only Aryeh Neier* [OSF's President from 1993 to 2012] *and a few others who participate in the budget review process are familiar with the whole range of activities—and the budget process takes six weeks to complete.* (Emphasis added.)

In Soros's Own Words

The shift from Stone to Patrick Gaspard (who only joined OSF in January 2017, initially as Vice-President for Programs, reporting to Stone) raises the question of the long-term trajectory of the Soros apparatus. Soros's own thinking on this topic is perhaps the best place to begin.

As early as his 1991 book *Underwriting Democracy*, Soros offered thoughts about the future of the Open Society Foundations. He wrote:

I feel that the foundations cannot continue in their present form indefinitely and need to be replaced by a different set of institutions—like the Central European University [CEU]—which are to be run along professional lines. Still, I should like to preserve the spirit that imbues the foundations as long as possible; I am even trying to infuse it into the Central European University, at least during its formative state. When that spirit is gone I shall have little in common with the institutions I have helped bring into existence; but presumably I shall be gone, too.”

Founded in 1991, CEU calls itself “a global community grounded in a firm belief in the role for open and democratic societies that respect human rights and human dignity.” The institution claims 13,000 alumni in 130 countries.

As some Soros critics have noted, for a “university,” CEU offers a surprisingly narrow set of classes. There's no physics department, no chemistry laboratories or space for the hard sciences generally—there's a “Department of Environmental Sciences and Policy,” however. What its offering lacks in terms of the hard sciences, it more than makes up in trendy leftist subjects such as “gender studies,” “network science,” “sociology and social anthropology,” and “nationalism studies.”

It says something about Soros's priorities, that he would so generously fund a school that prioritizes the social sciences over, say, providing a decently-provisioned school of engineering. Such a school could help energize an economic renaissance through the production of goods that could be



“[T]erminating the foundations network at the time of my death would be an act of excessive selfishness, the equivalent of an Indian maharajah's wives being burned on his funeral pyre.”—George Soros.

exported, in a part of the world that badly needs jobs and a manufacturing base.

Also in *Underwriting Democracy*, Soros recalls a speech he delivered to an Eastern European audience in 1990 regarding the future of his philanthropic activities in that region. To underline his willingness to try new approaches and abandon old ones, Soros boldly told the audience:

I don't like foundations. I think foundations corrupt the impulse that led to their formation. That is so because foundations become institutions and institutions take on a life of their own. A lot of people feel good when they have created an institution, but I feel bad. There is only one thing that can excuse the crime: if the foundations do something really worthwhile. Otherwise they have no business existing.

In the financial markets I have made a career out of taking advantage of institutions, of doing better than institutions, because the financial markets are dominated by institutions and the institutions always respond to the past and not to the future. That gave me a chance to make the fortune which I am giving away through my foundations. So I am quite serious in what I am saying about my opposition to institutions.

Again, in his introduction to *The Philanthropy of George Soros*, Soros elaborates his thinking further:

When I established the Open Society Foundations, I did not want them to survive me. The fate of other institutions taught me that they tend to stray very far from the founder's intentions. But as the Open Society Foundations took on a more substantial form, I changed my mind. I came to realize that terminating the foundations network at the time of my death would be an act of excessive selfishness, the equivalent of an Indian maharajah's wives being burned on his funeral pyre. A number of

very capable people are devoting their lives to the work of the Open Society Foundations; I have no right to pull the rug from under them. More importantly, we have identified a sphere of activity that needs to be carried on beyond my lifetime and whose execution does not really require either Aryeh's [Aryeh Neier, longtime OSF president] presence or mine. That niche consists in empowering civil society to hold government accountable...

Soros goes on:

What will be missing when I am gone is the entrepreneurial and innovative spirit that characterized the Open Society Foundations. I have tried to deal with problems as they arose through a process of trial and error. I was able to move fast and take big risks. The governing board that will succeed me will not be able to follow my example; it will be weighed down with fiduciary responsibilities. Some of its members will be faithful to the founder's intentions; others will be averse; but the founder is anything but risk averse.

How would Soros re-organize the foundations to continue his vision? One idea he shares is:

As things stand now, a new [Open Society] president would have to spend several years just to get to know the organization. I should like to appoint six to eight vice presidents who could take charge of discrete portions of the organization and report to an incoming president—that would leave him or her time to formulate strategy and consider new initiatives. But we must avoid a centralized structure at all cost. At present most of the innovative ideas come from within the network of networks, not from the top.

Soros further observes that the foundation apparatus has “more money than ideas” and needs to be able to “generate more ideas in order to use our money more effectively.” One solution is to:



Alexander Soros, the second-youngest child of George Soros, is working on his PhD in history and philosophy at the University of California at Berkeley. In 2017, his political giving had exceeded his father's by \$40,000.

Credit: Nathalie Schuller. License: <https://goo.gl/p6jeyV>

[o]utsource the process [of generating ideas] to the [School of Public Policy at Central European University], the school will produce public goods which count as output; if we did it internally, as most foundations do, that would count as overhead... To fulfill my hopes, the school would have to institutionalize the entrepreneurial and exploratory spirit that currently imbues the Open Society Foundations. That would involve taking a critical look at our prevailing beliefs and practices.

Soros has evidently done more than just muse in print about the future of the School of Public Policy. One of his sons, Alexander, is on the school's advisory board, perhaps indicating how much consideration Soros has given to further shaping its long-term evolution.

Another way Soros seeing the School as helping revivify the entire Open Society apparatus includes the following, again from *The Philanthropy of George Soros*: “Our main difficulty has been in keeping our network of national foundations and ‘legacy’ programs from going stale

because that requires almost as much effort as stating new ones; yet my bias has been to focus on the cutting edge. That is where I look for relief from the School of Public Policy. It is meant to be exploring new programs; therefore it should be able to keep the legacy programs up to date even in my absence.”

In Soros's Absence...

Having decided to allow the Open Society Foundations to survive me, I have done my best to prepare them for my absence. But it would contradict my belief that all human constructs are flawed if I had fully succeeded. Therefore, I bequeath my successors the task of revising any of the arrangements I shall leave behind in the same spirit in which I have made them.

—George Soros, 2011

In the event of Soros's eventual demise, who will provide the high-level oversight over the foundations that once came from its famous founder? Some observers assume that one

or more of his five children will step up. Let's get acquainted with the next Soros generation and then consider the likelihood of their involvement.

Alexander Soros. Born in 1985, he is the second-youngest child of George Soros. According to his website alexsoros.com, he is "currently at work on his PhD thesis work of history and philosophy entitled '*Jewish Dionysus: Heine, Nietzsche and the Politics of Literature*,'" while attending the University of California at Berkeley.

As one would expect from the son of his outspoken father, Alexander Soros's website includes links to his published articles, with titles on "progressive" topics like "Stop drowning the Amazon," "Look How Far Ukraine Has Come Since the Babi Yar Massacre," "Ridding the US marketplace of tainted timber," "How Hillary Clinton wins Florida and the Jewish vote," and "Willing to pay the ultimate price to protect animals."

Through his Alexander Soros Foundation (net assets of \$1.5 million per 2016 disclosures), he has backed groups such as: Center for a New American Security (\$250,000); Global Witness (\$550,000); and Seeds of Africa (\$350,000).

Of note: Michael Vachon, George Soros's long-time spokesman, is listed as a director of the Alexander Soros Foundation on its 2016 990 form. Vachon's connection with Alexander Soros may serve another purpose beyond simply advising on grants: Alexander Soros's image has undergone a media makeover in the last few years, as he had been pegged as the rich playboy type. Alexander's media appearances have become much more polished and highly controlled—in other words, he's being successfully handled.

As a board member, Soros is active with the Global Public Policy Institute in Berlin; Bend the Arc; Global Witness; and, of course, with the Open Society Foundations, where he serves as a member of the Global Board.

As CRC's Jacob Grandstaff noted in September of last year, in 2017 Alexander Soros donated approximately \$152,000 to various political committees and campaigns—including \$33,900 to the Democratic National Committee. At one point, the younger Soros's 2017 political giving had exceeded his father's by about \$40,000.

Andrea Soros Columbel. Taking a page from her father's playbook, Andrea is the only Soros daughter who has not named her foundation after herself; rather, she calls it the "Trace Foundation." In 2014, it reported net assets of just over \$337,000. Trace's work focuses on promoting the survival of Tibetan culture. It funds scholarships for Tibetan students, provides money for "production and distribu-



Credit: Acumen. License: <https://goo.gl/SE2Ht4>.

Andrea expressed her discomfort with the term "philanthropist" and its literal meaning of "lover of humanity," since, she said, "...there are lots of people who give away money who don't actually like people very much, let alone love them."

tion of Tibetan films" and the "preservation" of historically significant Tibetan buildings. Trace also maintains the Latse Library, "a premier research library dedicated to modern Tibetan studies" located in New York City.

Soros Columbel is also listed as President and Treasurer of the Fourdoves Foundation (net assets of \$12.6 million per 2015 990 form). In calendar year 2015, Fourdoves granted \$2 million to the Trace Foundation and another \$2 million to the Tibet-focused Tsadra Foundation founded by her husband, Eric Columbel.

Soros Columbel is associated as well with the Acumen Fund, a tax-exempt organization based in New York with net assets of \$112 million according to its 2016 990 form. Acumen provides what it calls "patient capital" to support groups and activities working to reduce global poverty. She served on Acumen's board from 2005 to 2014, and rejoined the board in 2017. She also serves as a member of the Open Society Global Board.

A 2013 speech by Soros Columbel to a gathering of Acumen backers posted to YouTube gives us some insight into her prickly approach to philanthropy. She expressed her discomfort with the term "philanthropist" and its literal meaning of "lover of humanity."

Soros Columbel commented:

I've never really liked this term; it seems very self-important and frankly not very accurate, since there are lots of people who give away money who don't actually like people very much, let alone love them.

Regarding Soros Columbel's politically-oriented giving, the *Washington Times* reported that, along with her father and brother, she had collectively contributed \$245,000 to J Street—a left-leaning Jewish political advocacy organization that positions itself as a progressive alternative to the more mainstream American Israel Political Action Committee (AIPAC.)

In August 2017, Soros Columbel donated \$500,000 to Planned Parenthood Votes, a Super PAC linked to Planned Parenthood. There's a wider family connection with Planned Parenthood (see reference below in connection with Jonathan Soros.)

Gregory Soros—the youngest Soros son and an aspiring artist, Gregory has not as of yet made his mark as a philanthropist and does not appear to be associated with any tax-exempt foundations.

Robert Soros—Soros's eldest son; he is listed as sole trustee of the Enterprise Foundation (net assets of \$5.3 million, going by 2014 990 form), which, notably, donated \$400,000 to the Open Society Institute that year. A 2012 profile of the Soros children posted to Forward.com noted that "Robert Soros, George's eldest son, and Gregory, his youngest, have been less publicly philanthropic than their siblings."

In June 2017, Robert announced he would start his own investment firm and that he was resigning from his long-time role with Soros Fund Management, founded by Soros, Sr.

Jonathan Soros—as one would expect, this son of Soros also has his own foundation, the Jennifer and Jonathan Allen Soros Foundation, which disclosed net assets of more than \$153 million in its 2015 990 form. Donations that year included \$1.25 million to New America Foundation; \$50,000 to the Brennan Center for Justice; \$518,000 to Planned Parenthood of America. (Of note: Jonathan's wife, Jennifer Allen Soros, has been a Planned Parenthood supporter for many years, going back to a summer internship with the organization.)

In 2014, the Jennifer and Jonathan Allen Soros foundation gave \$1 million to the shadowy Tides Foundation—and \$10,000 to the Acumen Fund, which is linked to his sister Andrea as noted above. Jonathan Soros is a member of the Open Society Global Board. Like his brother Robert, Jonathan has also been active for many years with Soros Fund Management; he subsequently set up his own financial operation, JS Capital Management, after leaving the family firm in 2012.

According to CampaignMoney.com, Jonathan Soros's political donations have been considerable—nearly \$167,000



Credit: Moyers & Company. License: <https://goo.gl/1et9t>.

Jonathan Soros has been active with the shadowy "Democracy Alliance"—a collection of millionaires and billionaires drawing from Hollywood (think Harvey Weinstein), Silicon Valley, and the financial sector who back far-left Democratic political candidates.

in 2016; \$1.7 million in 2014; \$857,000 in 2012; nearly \$120,000 in 2010. And, as CRC's Matthew Vadum has reported previously, Jonathan Soros has been active with the shadowy "Democracy Alliance"—a collection of millionaires and billionaires drawing from Hollywood (think Harvey Weinstein), Silicon Valley, and the financial sector who back far-left Democratic political candidates. (See Vadum's October 2014 *Foundation Watch* article, "The 'Vast Left-wing Conspiracy.'")

OSF's Inner Workings

In 2015, Canadian author Anna Porter published a largely sympathetic (even sycophantic) book about Soros entitled *Buying a Better World: George Soros and Billionaire Philanthropy*. Putting aside Porter's admiration for Soros (and readiness to denigrate practically all Soros critics), parts of the book are helpful and informative regarding OSF's inner workings, giving observers a further perspective on its future evolution after Soros.

For example, at least one long-standing Open Society board member, Leon Botstein, goes on the record with Porter to say that: "I wish that there had been a sunset moment [for the foundations] despite how good some of [Soros's] people are." Porter suggests Botstein believes that, without Soros himself around to provide guidance, the foundations will likely be unable to avoid becoming "bureaucratic."

Porter's book also includes some interesting snippets about former OSF president Christopher Stone. As part of his effort to simplify Open Society's complex structure, early in his tenure, Stone "eliminated the functions" (to use Porter's words) previously led by Tawanda Mutasah, who had served as Open Society's director of "network programs." These programs covered: arts and culture; education; human rights; and public health. (Mutasah now works at Amnesty International.)



"As one insider said, sometimes during the past years the foundations resembled a royal court with a king and his courtiers."—Anna Porter

Porter analysis of Central European University is also worth noting—especially in light of Soros's own statements on the institution as reviewed above. In summarizing CEU's growth from its founding in 1991, Porter writes: "None of this came without the hiccups of fast growth and too much unquestioned funding, internal feuding, and occasional intrigue, although not more so than in most universities. [Istvan] Teplan [CEU's executive director from 1992 to 2007, whom Porter interviewed for the book] was still bitter about former Rector Yehuda Elkana, under whose autocratic reign there were lavish dinners, even more lavish conferences, and some personal friends appointed to high positions." (Elkana served from 1999 to 2009 as CEU's third president; he died of cancer in 2012.)

Of CEU's own operations, Porter notes the weakness of its publishing arm, Central European University Press, calling it "a bit player" in the U.S. academic book market that suffers from "a lack of effective distribution." (No doubt some of the \$18 billion infusion of new Soros money can assist in this matter: The spread of Soros's ideas might quickly metastasize if CEU were able to publish books and produce other materials to incorporate directly into the curriculum of other universities!)

Porter sees a bright future for CEU, as an institution that "may yet turn out to be the incubator of future leaders..." But she saves her most tantalizing comment on the Open Society Foundations for the very last page of her book: "Soros's generosity has also had some unfortunate side effects: money often corrupts and large sums can lead to

excessive corruption, or, at the very least, excessive pandering. As one insider said, sometimes during the past years the foundations resembled a royal court with a king and his courtiers," she writes.

Indeed. All hail King George!

Open Society's "Moral Capital"

The Philanthropy of George Soros includes an afterword by former OSF president Aryeh Neier. In one section, Neier observes that:

[t]he Open Society Foundations have played a leading role in the development of the international human rights movement. Because of my own background, George Soros has largely deferred to me to guide the network's activities in this area. Thanks to the resources he has made available, we are today the largest supporter of the human rights movement worldwide. It is—along with the international environmental movement—one of the two largest, best organized and most influential global citizen movements.

Neier's statement highlights what George Soros, in another context, has called the "moral capital" of the foundation/philanthropy complex he funds—from which flows its ability to exercise political and cultural influence.

A great deal of this "moral capital" is owed to the perception (carefully orchestrated through sympathetic media coverage, as well as Soros's own loquacious public statements and interviews, and his many published books) that there is some kind of implicit unity of interest between what Soros's "open society" values and the well-being of those nations where OSF is active in funding non-profits advancing these ideals.

But this narrative of a philanthropic organization founded by a super-hero activist billionaire who provides barrels of cash to human rights organizations out of the goodness of his heart, simply to improve the world, is wearing thinner as time passes: Now, it is seen by many for what it has always been—an illusion, a magic trick. The sooner the central myth of Soros's philanthropic activities is called into question through public criticism and expressions of opposition to the OSF agenda, the faster the illusory "moral capital" of his works drains away.

In July 2017, for example, an Israeli government spokesperson singled out Soros as someone who "continuously undermines Israel's democratically elected governments" and



This narrative of a super-hero billionaire who provides barrels of cash to human rights organizations out of the goodness of his heart, simply to improve the world, is now seen by many for what it has always been—an illusion, a magic trick.

whose fortune funds groups “that defame the Jewish state and seek to deny it the right to defend itself.”

Soros’s image has taken a beating since the publication of a 2013 study detailing the links between OSF and organizations running campaigns intended to reduce global support for Israel; the study meticulously details OSF connections to anti-Israeli groups. Here are a few of them: Human Rights Watch (which received a \$100 million commitment from Soros in 2010); Media Matters; the Center for American Progress, and the Iranian American Council—not to mention several obscure Palestinian organizations.

“It is unclear whether or not Soros and his family know of the Open Society Foundations’ role in supporting the global delegitimization of Israel,” write Alexander H. Joffe and Professor Gerald M. Steinberg in their report entitled *Bad Investment: The Philanthropy of George Soros and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*. The answer to that question may be unclear, but OSF’s links to the organizations listed in the report are made perfectly clear.

With this information widely publicized and freely available around the world, the implicit unity of interest between Soros interests and the nation of Israel’s has been vastly diminished. In this area, Soros is left looking less like a generous, well-meaning benefactor and more like a schemer and a condescending political meddler.

What was common knowledge in Israel (that Soros cares little for the populations of individual nation states, their elected representatives, or what they may think of his efforts to impose his concept of an “open society” upon them) is quickly becoming apparent around the world.

As *Jerusalem Post* columnist Caroline Glick has eloquently put it: far from advancing some notion of the common good or general welfare, the influence wielded by Soros’s foundation/non-profit empire seems focused on “denying citizens of Western democracies the right to maintain any distance between themselves and” Soros’s ideas. And with Soros’s

foundations reaching more than 100 countries, she concludes, there are no “safe spaces.”

Meanwhile, for much of 2017, Soros and his Open Society apparatus has been under constant criticism from Hungary’s elected government which, ironically, is led by Viktor Orban, who as a younger man benefited from a Soros-funded scholarship.

Orban and other Hungarian conservatives take strong issue with Soros’s cheerleading for the European Union to re-settle untold thousands of Muslim refugees in its member states, including Hungary. Especially, their concerns are running high about the possible spread of jihadist theology and terrorist infiltration such re-settlement could facilitate.

Soros has been vocal on the subject of Muslim refugees since 2015, when he published an op-ed demanding that “the EU has to accept at least a million asylum-seekers annually for the foreseeable future.” A year later, in an essay for *Foreign Policy* Soros reiterated his call for Europe to open its doors: “the EU and the rest of the world must take in a substantial number of refugees directly from front-line countries in a secure and orderly manner...”

In September 2016, the OSF announced a partnership with the Government of Canada and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees “aimed at increasing private sponsorship of refugees around the world...” The joint press release on the partnership referenced how “[t]his project will complement other initiatives under development elsewhere in the world also aimed at mobilizing citizens and creating complementary pathways for admission of refugees.” This is a reminder of the OSF network’s long-standing efforts to normalize illegal immigration and oppose comprehensive immigration reform here in the U.S.

Hungarian critics of Soros’s refugee resettlement push have made their case in a manner that is, to say the least, out of step with conventional forms of political expression in Western Europe and the U.S.: The raising of huge, satirical billboards of a smirking, cartoonish Soros, with the slogan “Don’t Let Soros Have the Last Laugh!” leaves some observers here uncomfortable.

The crudeness of this graphic approach aside, Soros’s Hungarian critics succeeded in starkly highlighting that Emperor Soros has no clothes; that the implied unity of interest between Soros and Hungary as a political community with distinct interests (such as not importing jihadi terrorists) simply does not exist. The billboards advertise the fact that he places his own views high above those with whom he disagrees; and that mere elected governments

don't count for much with him when they take issue with his imperial schemes.

For all we know, George Soros may have another \$5 billion or \$10 billion in additional funds deposited abroad that may ultimately fall into the already over-stuffed coffers of OSF operations. And he can bequeath any number of loyal retainers and advisers to whichever family members rise to take his place at OSF's helm. He can leave extensive private guidance to the OSF Global Board; he can re-position the Central European University as a global think-tank for the OSF and provide CEU with a large endowment to that effect. He can do whatever he wants. He's Soros.

But not even Soros's billions can put the genie back into the bottle again. The word is out, and spreading around like never before: George Soros is *not* the "philanthropist" that he loudly claims to be. And the billions of dollars he has given away have nothing to do with loving humanity, and everything to do with the raw exercise of his own personal power and the imposition of his worldview upon the nations. ■

Read previous articles from the Foundation Watch series online at CapitalResearch.org/category/foundation-watch/.



The communist movement known as Antifa (short for Anti-Fascist Action) has sparked violence across the nation. In the wake of their battling white supremacist in Charlottesville, Antifa has begun to gain mainstream popularity. But unbeknownst to much of the public, the vast majority of Antifa violence isn't targeted at genuine fascists, but mainstream conservatives and civilians. With help from those who have encountered Antifa, Trevor Loudon guides us through the history and ideas behind the Antifa movement, starting with Leon Trotsky and going all the way through the events in Berkeley, CA and Charlottesville, VA.

WATCH AT: DangerousDocumentaries.com/film/America-Under-Siege-Antifa/

DECEPTION & MISDIRECTION



CREAMER AND FOVAL, PARTNERS IN DECEPTION

How two Democratic Party operatives tried to rig the 2016 election for Hillary Rodham Clinton

By Hayden Ludwig

Summary: 2016 Republican Presidential Nominee Donald Trump drew a record number of protests by left-wing activists during his campaign. These “grassroots” demonstrations, though, were anything but spontaneous. In this installment of our series on Deception & Misdirection, we take a look inside the sophisticated political machine created by two Democratic Party operatives, Robert Creamer and Scott Foval, to smear Trump supporters.

Remember the media’s coverage of supposedly violent Donald Trump supporters assaulting protesters at rallies last year? Many in the media tried to frame these demonstrations as spontaneous. But footage released by undercover journalists shows the truth: it was a hoax masterminded by two Democratic operatives—Robert Creamer and Scott Foval.

These operatives may have violated election laws by coordinating with the Clinton campaign to plant protesters. They hired mentally ill and homeless people to provoke violence at Trump rallies. They may have even engaged in voter fraud to try and tip the scales toward Democrats. When the scandal blew up shortly before the 2016 election, it cost them their jobs with the campaign.

Yet the chief strategist, Creamer, is still honored as a favorite of the Left.

Partners in Deception

On March 11, 2016, tens of thousands of people gathered in and around the arena at the University of Illinois at Chicago to attend a rally for Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump. For more than an hour leading up to the event, police and members of the security detail escorted hundreds of protesters and potential demonstrators out of the arena, arresting at least five for sparring with Trump supporters. It led to violence in which one officer was injured. A campaign representative announced the rally would be postponed due to safety concerns. Supporters, stunned and disappointed by the announcement, left the arena; protesters celebrated.



Credit: Americans United For Change. Youtube screenshot. License: <https://goo.gl/uvw08B8>.

Robert “Bob” Creamer is a Democratic consultant and political strategist with ties to many radical activist organizations. His wife is Rep. Janice Schakowsky (D-Illinois).

The UI Chicago Arena protest was just one in a series of increasingly violent anti-Trump demonstrations beginning as far back as June 2015. But, like many of the others, it bore the organizational hallmarks of the professional activist Left. Few in the crowd that day understood the sophistication and controlled nature of the scheme—and that the protest was just another piece in an elaborate web of deception orchestrated by elements tied to Hillary Clinton’s 2016 presidential campaign.

And at the heart of the web: Robert Creamer and Scott Foval, partners in deception.

Robert Creamer, the Kingpin

On October 17, 2016, an investigative group called Project Veritas released videos of its undercover journalists speaking with Creamer and Foval about their role in the Clinton

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campaign and related organizations. But their disruptive schemes and dirty tricks date back decades.

Robert “Bob” Creamer is a Democratic consultant and political strategist with ties to many radical activist organizations. He’s been active since at least the early 1970s with a number of Illinois-based groups. One of his longtime associations, Illinois Citizen Action, was allied with the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN), a massive left-wing organizer that shuttered in 2010 after allegations of voter fraud led the federal government to withdraw critical funding. Creamer served as executive director of Illinois Public Action, another activist organizer. His wife—current Rep. Janice Schakowsky (D-Illinois)—also worked as its program director.

In 1998, Creamer left Illinois state politics to found Strategic Consulting Group (SCG), a full-service political consulting firm with offices in Washington, D.C., and Chicago, Illinois. The firm’s website publishes a client list connecting Creamer with a bevy of wealthy organizations, influential Democratic officeholders, and high-profile political campaigns. SCG lists ACORN, the AFL-CIO, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), United Steelworkers Union of America, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), the League of Conservation Voters, People for the American Way, United for a Fair Economy, and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) as past clients. It also lists as clients a number of key Democratic candidacies, including Howard Dean’s campaigns for Vermont Governor, Pat Casey’s 2006 Pennsylvania Senate campaign, Mike Easley’s campaigns for North Carolina Governor, and his wife’s campaigns for Congress.

Creamer’s ties to the Democratic National Committee (DNC) are extensive. According to his brief biography on SCG’s website, he’s consulted on efforts to “end the war in Iraq, pass universal health care, hold Wall Street accountable, pass progressive budget priorities, and enact comprehensive immigration reform.”

The biography also says he consulted with the DNC in the 2008, 2012, and 2016 presidential elections, and was a vocal supporter of Barack Obama’s agenda. He’s described as the former general counsel for Americans United for Change (AUFC), a 501(c)(4) social welfare organization the left-leaning Sunlight Foundation identifies as a “dark money group,” funded by the National Education Association, AFSCME, MoveOn.org, and Occupy Wall Street. AUFC was founded in 2005 as part of a liberal effort to promote the “campaign to defeat the privatization of Social Security” backed by President George W. Bush, a campaign of which



In 2005, Democratic consultant Bob Creamer was indicted on 16 charges of tax violations and bank fraud.

Creamer identifies himself as a major architect. As AUFC’s general counsel, he later coordinated the campaign to pass President Barack Obama’s “landmark jobs and economic recovery legislation” and the 2015 Iran Nuclear Agreement.

In 2005, Creamer was indicted on 16 charges of tax violations and bank fraud. He pleaded guilty to manipulating checking accounts to defraud “nine financial institutions” out of some \$2.3 million in “unauthorized and unsecured short-term loans,” according to *the Washington Free Beacon*.

This kind of fraud should be sufficient to put someone away for a long time. But during the trial, Creamer received 200 letters of support from left-wing notables, including Sen. Richard Durbin (D-Illinois), Rev. Jesse Jackson, Obama campaign Chief Strategist David Axelrod, and former Clinton EPA Administrator Carol Browner. Ultimately Creamer served five months in federal prison in Terre Haute, Indiana, and another eleven months under house arrest.

During his incarceration in 2007 Creamer penned a lengthy political manual entitled, *Listen to Your Mother: Stand Up Straight! How Progressives Can Win*. Admitting that his views were influenced by the “legendary community organizer” Saul Alinsky, who wrote a similar manual in the 1960s called *Rules for Radicals*, the book is a cynical refutation of moderate liberalism in favor of Bolshevik-inspired take-no-prisoners tactics and a far-left agenda for the Democratic Party. Creamer lays out his vision for how the Democratic left-wing can take control of the party and create a permanent majority in the federal government, beginning with health care: We must create a national consensus that health care [sic] is a right, not a commodity; and that government must guarantee that right.

In the book, Creamer also advocates amnesty and citizenship for illegal aliens, calling them a “gigantic block of progressive voters—a block that could be decisive in the battle for the future.” Creamer emphasizes the need to put individuals living in the United States illegally on a path to citizenship so that they will be eligible to vote “by 2012 and 2016.” This startling blueprint is revealing. Wresting healthcare away from private insurers, he implied, is meant to create lasting reliance on the federal government. Coupled with amnesty for millions of new voters, he adds, would further ensure the supremacy of the Left in American politics.

Upon its release, the book was hailed as a triumph for progressive organizers. Tom Matzzie, the former Washington Director of MoveOn.org, a prominent left-wing website, penned the book's foreword. Arianna Huffington called it a "one-stop, nuts-and-bolts manual on how to run a winning campaign—and, in the process, return America to its progressive roots." Chuck Loveless, National Legislative Director for AFSCME, lauded Creamer's insightful explanation of "how to conduct successful issue campaigns and the challenges we face in moving forward on a social justice agenda."

Creamer's influence in national politics reached its crescendo during the Obama administration's push for the so-called Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, or Obamacare. Obamacare passed into law on March 23, 2010. In an opinion piece published not long after, Creamer gloated that Americans will "wake up this morning surrounded by a new political world."

Progressive values now define the fundamental frame of reference for a massive new sector of our economy: health care.... [F]rom this day forward in America[,] health care is no longer a privilege or a commodity but a right.

As he says in his book, Creamer was a critical coordinator in the campaign for the healthcare overhaul. He soon became a fixture in the Obama White House and one of the most well-connected operatives in Washington, D.C. Logs show he visited the presidential mansion 342 times between 2009 and 2016. Creamer met with the President 47 times.

During this period, Creamer worked closely with a range of unions and healthcare reform organizations, most prominently Health Care for America Now (HCAN)—a coalition that ran a \$60 million campaign from 2008 to 2013 strictly to support Obamacare. In his 2012 book *The Epic Battle to Make Health Care a Right in the United States*, Richard Kirsch—formerly HCAN's national campaign manager—identified Creamer as one of the key campaign heads. Creamer is a "brilliant strategist," Kirsch writes, "with an incisive mind, a font of fresh ideas, and relentless optimism." However, "he was a lousy financial manager, who took foolhardy risks to keep the organization afloat."

Kirsch's phrasing seems to cast Creamer as an ideologue bent on passing the healthcare overhaul at virtually any cost. But Obamacare, expansive as it is, falls short of Creamer's ultimate goal: single-payer (or universal) healthcare.

In a single-payer system, healthcare is administered by one entity: the federal government. Creamer claimed single-payer was "the best way to improve the health insurance system in America and simultaneously cut costs." He wrote

that a "public option, like Medicare, would have low administrative and marketing costs and major market clout."

Of course, this is far from the truth. In June, the California State Senate voted to establish a statewide single-payer system—an ambitious plan that fell flat when a legislative analysis put the total cost at \$330 to \$400 billion (the state's 2017 budget was \$183.2 billion).

But Creamer's wife, Jan Schakowsky, exhibited more honesty about the couple's ideological intentions in an April 2009 speech. "A public option will put the private insurance industry out of business and lead to single-payer," she told the crowd. "This is not a principled fight [for Obamacare]. This is a fight about strategy for getting there, and I believe we will."



Credit: Project Veritas. License: <https://go.gl/HBV7PO>.

Scott Foval moved into left-wing activism as regional political coordinator (later deputy political director) for People For the American Way (PFAW) from 2012-2016, a prominent nonprofit founded by Norman Lear.

It's worth noting that Schakowsky is at least as radical as her husband. As conservative commentator Stanley Kurtz noted in *National Review* in 2010, the congresswoman was a member of the Democratic Socialists of America—authoritarians and Soviet sympathizers—at the "start of her political career." Together with Democrat Rep. Steve Cohen (Tennessee) and Rep. Charles B. Rangel (New York), she co-sponsored the "Free Trade with Cuba Act" to normalize trade and travel relations with the totalitarian communist Cuban regime. In 2016, she was one of the members of Congress who accompanied President Obama on his trip to this socialist workers' paradise with palm trees.

Scott Foval, the Sidekick

Scott Foval, one of Bob Creamer's key associates, was an important partner in the 2016 election deception. A native Iowan, Foval's political career began with campaign activism for Iowa Democratic gubernatorial candidate Bonnie Campbell in 1994. He later moved into journalism and radio and television broadcasting in Illinois, and he was a reporter for the *Huffington Post* during the 2008 presidential election cycle.

Foval moved into left-wing activism as regional political coordinator (later deputy political director) for People For the American Way (PFAW) from 2012-2016, a prominent 501(c)(4) nonprofit founded by Norman Lear that publishes the website "Right Wing Watch" and various anti-conservative media campaigns. One of these advertisements opposed the nomination of Neil Gorsuch to the U.S. Supreme Court in February 2017, claiming this eminent jurist somehow "doesn't respect the Constitution." PFAW is funded in large part by ubiquitous leftist billionaire George Soros.

According to Foval's introductory biography on PFAW's website, he was hired to work with the group's activists in the 2012 "We Are Wisconsin" campaign, a multi-million-dollar labor union coalition funded primarily by the AFL-CIO, SEIU, and AFSCME to target Republican politicians during Wisconsin's 2011 state senate recall elections. The group went on to organize union opposition to Governor Scott Walker's right-to-work legislation in 2015. Foval later served as national field director for Americans United for Change (AUFC), a position which brought him into proximity with the 2016 Hillary Clinton presidential campaign.

"An Ongoing Pony Express"

In February 2011, Bob Creamer co-founded Democracy Partners (DP), a political consultancy composed of other DNC-connected consultants. (His own firm, SCG, now operates as a "component part" of Democracy Partners, according to his LinkedIn account.) DP operates at the highest levels of Democratic politics, and its clients reflect that status: notably AUFC, Alliance for Change, Alliance for Retired Americans (an AFL-CIO branch), and Priorities USA (Hillary Clinton's main 2016 super PAC). Together with the Foval Group—Scott Foval's "media, events, and strategy consulting firm," which he ran from 2003 to October 2016 according to his LinkedIn profile—DP played an essential, if legally murky, role in coordinating the many arms involved with the Clinton campaign.



Democracy Partners played an essential, if legally murky, role in coordinating the many arms involved with the Clinton campaign.

"We have a call with the [Clinton] campaign every day to go over the focuses that need to be undertaken," Creamer says to an undercover journalist in the first Project Veritas video.

In Foval's words, DP was "kind of like an ongoing Pony Express" between various Democratic Party campaigns, the DNC, and Priorities USA. As he describes it, DP's partners and employees skirted the Federal Election Commission's (FEC) strict legal prohibitions on coordination between political campaigns and activist groups or nonprofits by acting as unofficial liaisons:

The campaigns and DNC cannot go near Priorities [USA], but I guaran-damn-tee you that the people who run the super PACs all talk to each other, and we and a few other people are the hubs of that communication.

Since PACs can raise unlimited sums, the FEC prohibits "independent expenditures"—that is, partisan expenses made by a political action committee (PAC)—from being "materially involved in decisions regarding" communications between candidates for public office and PACs. It's important to note that it remains unclear whether Democracy Partners violated FEC coordination laws during the 2016 election cycle. Nonetheless, the Project Veritas revelations are troubling. In the first of the group's videos, Foval notes the importance of maintaining the deception of separation between the Clinton campaign and its support groups:

The thing that we have to watch is making sure there is a double blind between the actual campaign and the actual DNC and what we're doing. There's a double blind there. So they can plausibly deny that they knew anything about it.

As consultants, Creamer and Foval are somewhat legally removed from these political coordination laws, but they could in effect coordinate the various groups through DP's internal communications. Foval identifies Creamer as the "primary" for the DNC client, and himself as a "sub to him" as well as a "primary to AUFC separately." As he puts it, "I'm the white hat, Democracy Partners is kind of the dark hat [arranging and paying for subcontractors]."



Credit: NothingSpecial123. License: <https://goo.gl/Q18u8a>.

The violent University of Illinois at Chicago arena protest was just another piece in an elaborate web of deception orchestrated by elements tied to Hillary Clinton's 2016 presidential campaign.

The Deception

Where did Bob Creamer and Scott Foval fit into the Clinton campaign?

The goal of their schemes was to create negative media coverage for Republican candidates—casting Trump supporters as violent. They framed the incidents as spontaneous protests gone awry, especially on those rare occasions when Trump supporters assaulted demonstrators. To further this effort, they sent activists to provoke fights with supporters at Trump rallies, such as the cancelled event in Chicago in March 2016. Foval said, “We know that Trump’s people will [tend to] freak the f*** out... It is not hard to get some of these assholes to ‘pop off.’”

We’re here to cause “conflict engagement in the lines at Trump rallies,” Foval continues. “We’re starting anarchy here.” But that only works if the media can pick it up—which is why Foval makes it clear that their efforts are aimed at creating chaos *outside* rallies, where television crews can capture footage of brawls involving red cap-wearing conservatives.

This technique is called “birddogging.” In birddogging, you pre-plant people in the front of a line leading into a rally, next to camera-wielding reporters. These activists then berate Trump as he walks past the line with aggressive questions designed to cast his campaign in a negative light. You do this in front of the journalists who you can count on to report it as a spontaneous anti-Trump demonstration.

One example of Creamer’s handiwork is Shirley Teeter, a 69-year-old woman and lifelong protester with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. In September 2016, Teeter was punched by a Trump supporter at a North Carolina rally she was protesting. The media soon picked up the story, and many on the Left lambasted Trump’s followers as savages who attack handicapped demonstrators without provocation. “She was one of our activists,” Foval said bluntly, and had been trained to birddog.

Infiltrating so many events requires a sophisticated network and coordination. This kind of deception is Bob Creamer’s specialty. “Wherever Trump and Pence are gonna be we have events,” he said. “And we have a whole team across the country that does that.”

Both consultants and people from the Democratic Party and the Democratic Party apparatus and people from the campaign, the Clinton campaign. And my role in the campaign is to manage all that.

Training agitators to work effectively takes time, money, and access to a nationwide arsenal of professional activists. Getting activists to birddog events means weeks of logistical preparation, and funneling them there early in the morning. DP reportedly maintained a schedule of Donald Trump and Mike Pence campaign appearances across the U.S., updating it daily. “We have to have people prepared to go wherever these [Trump and Mike Pence] events are,” Foval admitted, “which means we have to have a central kind of agitator training.” These “built-in” activist cells are located across the country. Foval rattled off a few they’ve used in rallies for the 2016 election cycle: Las Vegas, New York, Washington, D.C., and Colorado.

Creamer and Foval made frequent use of union members to accomplish the seedier jobs. “A lot of union guys, they’ll do whatever you want. They’re rock and roll,” said Foval:

When I need to get something done in Arkansas, the first guy I call is the head of the AFL-CIO down there, because he will say, ‘What do you need?’ And I will say, I need a guy who will do this, this and this. And they find that guy. And that guy will be like, yeah, hell, let’s do it.

More disturbing, however, is DP’s penchant for hiring homeless people and the mentally ill to assault Trump supporters. “Sometimes the crazies bite and sometimes the crazies don’t bite.” Apparently, this isn’t uncommon. “No,” Foval continued, “I’m saying we have mentally ill people that we pay to do shit, make no mistake.” And this goes back years:



Credit: Fibonacci Blue. License: <https://goo.gl/3u7PMk>.

Creamer's most bizarre ploy in the 2016 presidential election came in the shape of a duck costume, to mock Donald Trump for "ducking" calls to release his tax returns.

Over the last twenty years, I've paid off a few homeless guys to do some crazy stuff, and I've also taken them for dinner, and I've also made sure they had a hotel, and a shower, and I put them in a program. Like, I've done that.

Bob Creamer is Democracy Partners' "kingpin," Foval said. "Bob is diabolical, and I love him for it." He's responsible for the bulk of the group's many schemes and protests. Everything is storyboarded beforehand, or—as Foval said with a grin—"scenarioed."

CC

"Over the last twenty years, I've paid off a few homeless guys to do some crazy stuff."—Scott Foval

"There's a script of engagement," he explained. They even paid activists' legal and medical bills if they got arrested or "punched out at a rally." He pointed to an incident in August 2015, when Wisconsin Governor and Republican presiden-

tial candidate Scott Walker attempted to grab the sign of a protester in front of the stage and a minor scuffle ensued. "That was all us. The guy [protester] who got roughed up is my counterpart who works for Bob [Creamer]."

Sometimes Democracy Partners brought in specialists for certain jobs. "[W]e also did the Arizona one where we shut the highway down," said Zulema Rodriguez, a professional agitator for DP. She was referring to an incident in March 2016, when several protesters were arrested for blocking a major road in Arizona leading to a Donald Trump rally with Sheriff Joe Arpaio. Shouting "Trump is hate," they positioned their cars in the way of traffic. Ultimately, the event went forward, but an hour behind schedule.

Another specialist was Aaron Black (real name: Aaron Minter), a Creamer employee and the rapid response director "for all things Trump on the ground for the DNC." His role was hush-hush, he said—"no one is really supposed to know about me." Minter claimed that he and Democracy Partners were responsible for the violence which led to the cancellation of the March 2016 rally in Chicago. Of course, the trick is making the protest appear spontaneous; if it is cast as the DNC's partisan handiwork, it loses effectiveness among voters.

The Chicago job “was more him [Creamer] than me,” Minter explained, “but none of this is supposed to come back to us because we want it coming from people; we don’t want it coming from the [Democratic] Party.”

Donald (Trump) Ducks

Creamer’s most bizarre ploy in the 2016 presidential election came in the shape of a duck costume.

The idea was to mock Donald Trump for “ducking” calls to release his tax returns, a common but not legally required tradition among presidential candidates. “We put out a whole blast and a [news] release around the idea that he [Donald Trump] was ducking,” AUFC president Brad Woodhouse was recorded saying by a Project Veritas investigator. But the scheme involved sending protesters to demonstrate outside of the Trump International Hotel in Washington, D.C., dressed in duck costumes. They called it “Donald Ducks.”



It was Hillary Clinton herself who demanded that Democracy Partners employ the Donald Ducks project, designed to mock her opponent Donald Trump. She “just loved it.”

This fowl affair offers a glimpse into the inner workings of Creamer’s machine. “Originally,” he said, “we were going to do... Uncle Sam [saying], ‘I want you to release your tax returns.’ I agree it’s not as good.” They rejected the idea in favor of the mildly cleverer duck costume, he told the undercover investigator; but most critically it was Hillary Clinton herself who demanded that DP employ the Donald Ducks project. She “just loved it,” he said during a meeting with Woodhouse. “And in the end, it was candidate, Hillary Clinton, the future president of the United States, who wanted ducks on the ground. So, by God, we will get ducks on the ground.”

“Don’t repeat that to anybody,” he quickly adds.

If any part of Democracy Partners’ role as a communications hub for the Clinton campaign apparatuses potentially violates FEC coordination laws, it’s the Donald Ducks scheme. Project Veritas founder James O’Keefe says that experts have told him that

the ducks on the ground are likely “public communications” for purposes of the law. It’s political activity opposing Trump, paid for by Americans United for Change funds but controlled by Clinton/her campaign.

It’s important to remember, too, that in the Project Veritas videos, Creamer is heard saying that the AUFC ran daily conference calls with the Clinton campaign, coordinating where to send the costumed agitators and how to frame strategic messaging. Foval added that “[w]e have to clear this with the DNC, with the Democratic National Committee. We have to clear which message we’re going to be targeting at each event.”

Then-DNC Chair Donna Brazile, Creamer explained, was worried about a trademark issue concerning ABC, which is owned by the Walt Disney Company, and the similarity with the Disney character Donald Duck. So Creamer and DP reframed the slogan from “Donald ducks his taxes” to “Trump ducks releasing his tax returns,” and put the project under the ownership of AUFC. When the *Wall Street Journal* reported on the decision on September 8, 2016, the DNC spokesman refused to say why they’d cut ties with the character.

“Dreamers” and Schemers

One of the duo’s ongoing projects involved voter fraud with illegal aliens living in the United States. Project Veritas captured footage of Scott Foval brainstorming ways to use lax voter identification laws to influence elections with an undercover investigator posing as a donor. Foval then put the “donor” in touch with Cesar Vargas, an illegal immigrant born in Mexico.

Vargas is what the Obama administration called a “dreamer,” a class of noncitizens protected under the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and DREAM Act programs. He recently became New York’s first “openly undocumented lawyer,” wrote Natalie Shutler in *VICE* magazine, after winning a four-year battle in the courts to defy a federal rule banning states from issuing professional licenses to most noncitizens in the country. Vargas is a left-wing activist and co-founder of Dream Action Coalition, a nonprofit that advocates for illegal immigrants. In January 2015, he was arrested after protesting Republican presidential candidates at the Iowa Freedom Summit with a sign reading, “Deportable?” Vargas later joined Sen. Bernie Sanders’ 2016 presidential bid as National Latino Outreach Strategist, and is a “known associate” of Bob Creamer, according to Project Veritas. Meeting with the “donor,” Vargas is recorded saying:

So I think it's about, for us, let's see who the next president is. If it—if it's Donald Trump, it even makes more sense. The issue will be more credible and it'll give us more opportunity to jump in there. If it's Secretary Clinton, and the voter ID laws are losing and we have much more opportunity to vote, and we have immigration reform, it's not going to be as significant, right?

Encouraging noncitizens to illegally vote in American elections isn't voter fraud, according to Vargas, it's "civil disobedience."

Falling On Your (Rubber) Sword

"It doesn't matter what the frigging legal and ethics people say," Foval admits about the 2016 election in the Project Veritas videos, "We need to win this mother***er!" For Bob Creamer and Scott Foval, victory is always the goal—and the means are always negotiable.

When Project Veritas released the footage of its undercover sting in October 2016, video views exploded on YouTube and conservative media outlets. Many television networks, however, quickly cancelled their agreements to run the videos, limiting the fallout for the Clinton campaign in the leadup to the November 8 election. Some left-wing media outlets and the DNC accused Project Veritas of doctoring its video, calling PV founder James O'Keefe "discredited" and pointing to two past instances during similar investigations

where the group edited video and audio alignment to solidify its narrative. O'Keefe dismissed the responses.

But if the videos were doctored or fake, why did Creamer resign and Foval get the boot from the Clinton campaign apparatus virtually overnight?

That only lends credence to Project Veritas's claims of election fraud and dirty practices by Clinton-aligned groups. (Cesar Vargas, notably, did not lose his job over the videos.)

For Creamer, of course, the firing didn't come with any *real* consequences. Few on the Left took his firing seriously, considering he retains his prominent position with Democracy Partners and SCG.

The happy felon and his wife were even honored with a seat in the front-row during President Obama's farewell speech in January 2017 (watch the video at YouTube: <https://youtu.be/GzOyEwSecuY>). And according to CRC vice president Dr. Steven J. Allen and Matthew Vadum, Creamer has a cushy job teaching filmmaking at the prestigious American Film Institute. Whatever the Trump presidency may bring, Creamer doesn't seem about to go anywhere anytime soon.

It's a sad ending to a tale of corruption, though the larger story seems far from over. In the shady world of left-wing politics, it seems, crime indeed pays. ■

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BERLINROSEN

The Left's consulting firm of choice

By Michael Watson

Summary: In November 2017, far-left New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio (D) was re-elected, taking 66 percent of the vote over Republican State Assemblywoman Nicole Malliotakis. De Blasio's easy reelection papered over the controversies which marked his first term, many of which surrounded his campaign communications consulting firm, BerlinRosen. The firm has shot to prominence since it worked on de Blasio's first campaign, becoming the communications consultants of choice for left-wing nonprofit advocacy groups, New York state politicians, and labor unions; BerlinRosen was even paid to handle media for Green Party Presidential nominee Jill Stein during her bizarre recount demands following the 2016 Presidential election.

BerlinRosen is a for-profit public relations and campaign communications consulting firm headquartered in New York City constantly at work for Democratic campaigns, progressive nonprofit organizations, and labor unions, with a focus on New York. Founded in 2005 by former ACORN employee and New York Senate Democratic Conference staffer Valerie Berlin and political consultant Jonathan Rosen, the firm rose to prominence after its client Bill de Blasio (D) won the election for mayor of New York in 2013.

Since de Blasio's election, the firm has been a key player in influence scandals surrounding de Blasio's mayoral administration. BerlinRosen and its principal Jonathan Rosen played a lead role in several controversies—among them, the Mayor's 2014 efforts to secure a Democratic Conference majority in the New York State Senate; de Blasio's use of his political consultants as informal advisors; and the management of the de Blasio-associated nonprofit organization Campaign for One New York.

In addition to working for de Blasio and his administration, BerlinRosen has served as a consultant for numerous labor unions, most notably for the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) for whom they ran the Fight for \$15 minimum wage and fast food restaurant unionization campaign. The campaign has been criticized by both the right and the left for its top-down organization by BerlinRosen and the SEIU.



BerlinRosen rose to prominence after its client Bill de Blasio (D) won the election for mayor of New York in 2013.

While politicians and labor unions are the clients for whom BerlinRosen has earned its greatest notoriety, the company has also worked for law firms, corporations, environmentalist groups, progressive foundations, and other left-wing nonprofits. Various executive-level staff share backgrounds in Democratic Party campaigns, labor union activism, and the liberal nonprofit world. Since the company is privately held, disclosure of its activities is rarely forthcoming.

Michael Watson is Capital Research Center's research director and the managing editor of InfluenceWatch.org. He also co-hosts the InfluenceWatch podcast.

Credit: Bill de Blasio. License: <https://goo.gl/CbNbFB>.

Background

The co-principals of BerlinRosen, Valerie Berlin and Jonathan Rosen, are longtime veterans of New York left-wing politics. Before the joint venture that became BerlinRosen, they worked for the New York State Senate's Democratic Conference under then-state Sen. David Paterson (D-Manhattan). Berlin had already worked for the controversial labor union-aligned community organizing network ACORN and future New York State Attorney General (and BerlinRosen client) Eric Schneiderman (D). Rosen was an alumnus of the failed 2001 mayoral campaign of then-New York City Public Advocate Mark Green (D).

In 2005, Berlin and Rosen formed a communications and political consulting firm, which they named after themselves. Early efforts included a \$200,000 ad campaign attacking Republican candidates for the New York State Senate and media relations work for embattled senior New York Democrats Eliot Spitzer and Sheldon Silver.

People

Valerie Berlin and Jonathan Rosen serve as the firm's co-principals. Both have enjoyed long careers in Democratic Party politics and labor union organizing. Their success with their eponymous consulting firm has made them both prominent and rich. According to New York property records from 2014, both Berlin's and Rosen's families own homes in Brooklyn's trendy Park Slope neighborhood purchased for more than \$1 million each. Rosen and his wife later bought a \$2.5 million estate on Montauk, Long Island. Being well-connected liberals certainly has its perks.

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BerlinRosen has been a key player in influence scandals surrounding de Blasio's mayoral administration.

Other BerlinRosen executive-level staffers have seen action in the front ranks of a variety of liberal organizations and Democratic political campaigns. According to the firm's website, managing director and executive vice president-level staff experience includes the SEIU; the Hillary Clinton campaign; the Presidential campaign of Barack Obama; the Obama White House; and the office of former U.S. Senator Paul Wellstone (D-Minnesota).



Credit: The New School. YouTube screenshot. License: <https://goo.gl/4y4Dea>.

Valerie Berlin and Jonathan Rosen serve as the firm's co-principals. Both have enjoyed long careers in Democratic Party politics and labor union organizing. Their success with their eponymous consulting firm has made them both prominent and rich.

Bill de Blasio and BerlinRosen's Rise to Power

In 2013, the already-notable firm made its largest splash to date when its client, then-New York City Public Advocate Bill de Blasio, won election as Mayor of New York City. The firm took credit for designing a media strategy that led de Blasio to surge in the decisive Democratic primary by emphasizing his opposition to the controversial "stop and frisk" police tactic, then common in New York.

After the election, BerlinRosen leveraged their association with the mayor into substantial informal influence that ultimately backfired: The firm (and Jonathan Rosen personally) quickly became embroiled in several of the numerous scandals that surrounded the de Blasio administration. In 2015, NY1 characterized Rosen as "the most powerful man in [New York City] politics outside City Hall" based on his closeness to the mayor and his position at the nexus between private-sector clients doing business with the city and the de Blasio administration.

Controversies Involving Work for de Blasio

BerlinRosen's intimate ties to the de Blasio Administration has earned it a certain guilt by association; it has been tarred by the brush of the mayor's numerous controversies.



De Blasio's nonprofit, Campaign for One New York, controversially accepted substantial sums from entities with business before the city.

The firm's involvement in de Blasio's controversial nonprofit organization Campaign for One New York garnered a subpoena during the investigation into the mayor's efforts to secure a Democratic Conference majority in the New York State Senate. BerlinRosen apparently received assistance from de Blasio through emails on behalf of private-sector clients. Also, Jonathan Rosen was pronounced an "agent of the city" by de Blasio, in a futile attempt to keep communications with him secret from New York's open records law, the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL).

Campaign for One New York

Shortly after de Blasio's election, his political operatives set up a nonprofit organization, the Campaign for One New York, to promote his agenda. Controversially, this nonprofit accepted substantial sums from entities with business before the city: The American Federation of Teachers, a labor union involved in contract negotiations with the Mayor, contributed over \$350,000 to the group—just one example of many. BerlinRosen managed communications for Campaign for One New York and received an annual retainer of \$500,000 for their efforts. In 2016, after a battering of criticism, the nonprofit reported it would wind down in advance of the 2017 mayoral elections.

State Senate Campaigns

In the 2014 election cycle, Mayor de Blasio pushed hard to secure the majority in the New York State Senate for the mainline Democratic Conference. Going into the election (and again after the 2016 elections) the Senate was controlled by a coalition of Republicans and break-away Democrats.

De Blasio sought to support the election of mainline Democrats from upstate districts, and encouraged mega-donors, including people doing business with the city, to make direct contributions to upstate local Democratic Party committees. The same donations were solicited on the behalf of Campaign for One New York. In this case, the county committees directed funds to candidates who then directed much of the funds to consultancies including BerlinRosen. This led to a subpoena by investigators seeking information on whether de Blasio had violated campaign finance or other laws.

The above actions also raised ethical questions: Did the Mayor or his agents improperly coordinate with local campaigns? Keep in mind, nonprofits like Campaign for One New York are prohibited from doing just that. A state Board of Elections investigator who subpoenaed documents from BerlinRosen and other consultants found "evidence of campaigns that were coordinated at every level and down to minute detail." Indeed. Additional controversy surrounded appearances that the efforts tended to "line the pockets" of BerlinRosen and other preferred de Blasio consultants. In the end, no charges were filed against any entity or person in the case.

City Hall Client Service

BerlinRosen has used its connections in City Hall to advance the interests of clients with business before the city, in some cases at the initiative of Mayor de Blasio himself. Emails revealed in response to FOIL requests between de Blasio and BerlinRosen principal Jonathan Rosen showed that de Blasio had asked Rosen about attendance at a Barclays Center event; this while BerlinRosen represented Barclays Center in a public relations capacity. The obvious mixing of business interests and mayoral action on view here was criticized by city watchdog group Citizens Union.

BerlinRosen also represents the Coalition for the Homeless, at whose annual luncheon de Blasio's wife, Chirlane McCray, spoke in 2014. Emails showed that the Coalition had used Jonathan Rosen as a contact point to City Hall in an effort to secure de Blasio administration support. BerlinRosen also convinced Mayor de Blasio to record a video tribute to Bruce Ratner, executive chairman of BerlinRosen client Forest City Ratner Companies.

Meanwhile, one palm was busy greasing the other: in the normal course of its business, BerlinRosen also represented clients opposed to the mayor's policies; on at least one occasion they tipped off City Hall to this opposition: In 2014, Jonathan Rosen himself informed a mayoral aide that Communities United for Police Reform, one of BerlinRosen's clients, would be issuing a statement condemning New York's "broken windows" policing policies. Watchdogs at the time noted that Rosen's actions appeared to create a conflict of interest, given BR's work on behalf of both the mayor and Communities United. At the very least, these were lobbying activities in which Rosen held no license to engage.

"Agents of the City"

Obtaining information on Jonathan Rosen's involvement in the de Blasio Administration proved difficult for investigators. Mayor de Blasio "knighted" Jonathan Rosen and three consultants from other firms "agents of the city," providing

for a time an effective shield and exempting de Blasio's communications with Rosen from the open records law FOIL. But a state court ruled that de Blasio's communications with Rosen were not privileged. The judge's opinion held that "correspondence between the mayor and Rosen, who has not been formally retained by the mayor or any other city agency, is not exempt from disclosure under the inter-agency or intra-agency deliberative privilege under FOIL."

Labor Union Work

Campaign consulting for left-wing candidates is just one of BerlinRosen's activities supporting left-wing political actors. It is just as heavily involved in organizing and handling communications for labor union corporate campaigns. In 2016, for example, unions spent over \$7.9 million on BerlinRosen's services.

Fight for \$15

Certainly, the most notable labor union campaign involving BerlinRosen is the "Fight for \$15," a campaign funded by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) aimed at doubling the federal minimum wage and unionizing fast food restaurants. Organizing protests has proven lucrative for BerlinRosen. In 2016, SEIU paid the firm \$1.75 million; prior years also showed million-plus-dollar spending from SEIU on BerlinRosen services. The firm was credited with developing a "strike in a box" toolkit to assist messaging and organization for labor demonstrations.

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Conservatives suggested that BerlinRosen's looming presence and the lack of worker involvement reeked of "Astroturfing"—an apt expression denoting the creation of fake grassroots movements.

BerlinRosen's activities in the campaign have been controversial. Progressive commentators noted that aggressive BR and SEIU organizing crowded out worker-to-worker level organizing and actually risked the success of the campaign.



One of BerlinRosen's other labor clients is the Communications Workers of America (CWA), one of the most left-wing of all labor unions.

Observers also speculated about low worker involvement: One Associated Press report on demonstrations in New York City indicated "it wasn't clear how many participants were fast-food workers, rather than campaign organizers, supporters or members of the public relations firm that has been coordinating media efforts"—meaning BerlinRosen. Conservatives suggested that BerlinRosen's looming presence and a comparative lack of worker involvement reeked of "Astroturfing"—a particularly apt expression denoting the creation of fake grassroots movements.

In addition to its work with the SEIU, BerlinRosen has represented other liberal groups involved in Fight for \$15. The National Employment Law Project (NELP), a union-funded employment law and policy advocacy group, retained BerlinRosen as a consultant, paying the firm \$122,734 in 2014. A BR consultant also worked with NELP to ensure press coverage for a controversial study of the now infamous Seattle minimum wage increase.

OUR Walmart

The United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) retained BerlinRosen for services related to staging an organizing campaign. The "Organization United for Respect at Walmart" was organized by the UFCW to attempt to unionize retailer Wal-Mart; BerlinRosen handled public relations for the group and its counterpart project under the UFCW's own banner. From 2012 through 2015, while OUR



Credit: Lonnie Tigue (DOJ). License: <https://goo.gl/5YkSen>.

BerlinRosen has other powerful clients in New York beyond Mayor de Blasio's office. The most notable is perhaps State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman (D), once Valerie Berlin's boss.

Walmart was in operation, the union paid BerlinRosen approximately \$1.1 million for representational activities. Again, a nice haul.

Communications Workers of America

One of BerlinRosen's other labor clients is the Communications Workers of America (CWA), one of the most left-wing of all labor unions. In 2011, the CWA retained BR for a campaign against the New York Times Company on behalf of CWA-represented employees in a contract dispute. The consulting firm performed the same service for CWA in several disputes, organizing campaigns, and strikes involving Verizon Cablevision, and AT&T. BR has worked for CWA since 2006, receiving over \$3.5 million in 2016 alone from the labor union!

United Auto Workers

In 2015, the United Auto Workers retained BerlinRosen to advocate for members to ratify its agreement with Fiat Chrysler Automobiles. UAW paid BerlinRosen over \$470,000 for its services.

Other Known Clients

In addition to its work for de Blasio, de Blasio-related entities, and labor unions, BerlinRosen has hired out to numerous liberal groups across the issue spectrum. Politicians as far afield as Eugene, Oregon, have received the benefit of

BR's five borough-bred experience, as have a smattering of liberal-aligned corporations elsewhere. According to the *New York Times*, the progressive donor consortium Democracy Alliance is another well-known BerlinRosen client.

Liberal Organizations

Many liberal organizations have paid substantial sums into BerlinRosen's coffers. The radical environmentalist group Food and Water Watch compensated the consultants \$132,673 for services in 2013. Liberal judicial policy outfit Brennan Center for Justice reported substantial expenditures to BerlinRosen in numerous years, with its most recent 2015 tax returns showing expenditures of \$120,345 to the firm. BerlinRosen has also handled press inquiries for gun control organizations, most notably Shannon Watts' Moms Demand Action.

BerlinRosen's work for nominally independent liberal groups intersects closely with its work for labor unions. The National Employment Law Project, a left-wing think tank which marches in lock step with labor unions and the Fight for \$15 crowd, is also a BerlinRosen client. In 2015, NELP paid BR \$146,794, a disbursement that led to controversy after it emerged that the latter had helped NELP and Seattle Mayor Ed Murray release a particularly partisan study: In substance, this study covered up the negative effects of the \$15 per hour minimum wage Murray had championed, despite being flagged as detrimental in another city-commissioned study.

Politicians

BerlinRosen has other powerful clients in New York beyond Mayor de Blasio's office. The most notable is perhaps State Attorney General Eric Schneiderman (D), once Valerie Berlin's boss. Schneiderman has maintained a relationship with the firm since 2010, when he retained BerlinRosen to support his first successful campaign for Attorney General.

The firm's octopus-like tentacles of influence, however, reach across the country to the Left Coast. Joshua Skov, an unsuccessful candidate for the Eugene, Oregon, city council hired the firm in 2016.

Green Party Presidential candidate Jill Stein's connection to BerlinRosen has already been briefly mentioned, but is worth an in depth analysis: In the 2016 U.S. Presidential election, BR handled press related to the Green Party candidate's recount efforts in Michigan, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania, all states which had been won narrowly by Republican candidate Donald Trump.¹ BerlinRosen effectively circulated Stein's claims that the election was "tarnished by the use of



The consulting firm isn't just a labor of left-leaning love: BerlinRosen has made its founders rich and powerful along the way.

outdated and unreliable machines.”² According to Federal Election Commission records, Stein’s campaign paid BerlinRosen \$252,834 for this bit of misinformation.³

Corporations

BerlinRosen has done work for many liberal-positioned corporations with business before New York political bodies. Most notable has been the short-term lodging brokerage AirBnB. This internet dependant and regulation-chary company hired BR to launch Super PAC attacks on Republican members of the New York State Senate who opposed an AirBnB expansion in New York City.⁴ BerlinRosen has also been employed by law firm Cohen Milstein Sellers and Toll, known for their work with labor unions.⁵

Conclusion

Through its highly effective and lucrative work for left-wing New York politicians, labor unions, and liberal advocacy organizations, BerlinRosen serves as a crucial messaging mouthpiece for the American left. But the consulting firm

isn’t just a labor of left-leaning love: BerlinRosen has made its founders rich and powerful along the way. Valerie Berlin, Jonathan Rosen and other executive level operatives at the firm have become key influencers in national labor policy and major players in New York City politics. ■

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GOLD INTO DROSS? THE STORY OF ALASKA'S PEBBLE MINE

How bureaucrats and environmentalists fought to deny commercial access to the largest undeveloped copper and gold deposit on earth

By Ned Mamula

Summary: *The Pebble Mine project in Alaska is a critical part of any plan to restore the nation's independence with regard to strategic minerals. Yet the Environmental Protection Agency, allied with environmentalist groups, has worked to block the project, even resorting to the creation of an imaginary mine, real enough for bureaucrats' purposes. It's a story of intrigue, overreach, and unethical behavior by government officials who are supposed to be serving the interests of the American people.*

The "Pebble Project," located in southwest Alaska, is among the most significant metallic mineral deposits ever discovered. The site is located on state lands in southwest Alaska that were accepted by the state as part of a land swap with the federal government, specifically for its mineral potential. In addition, the site has been designated for mineral exploration and development through two public land-use planning processes.

This story of bureaucrats and environmentalists vs. the Pebble Mine goes back to 2005, during the George W. Bush administration, through the Obama administration and into the early days of the Trump administration. At last President Trump has signaled an intention to reverse some of the previous anti-Pebble Mine policies: He signed an Executive Order on February 28 directing the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to revise its expansive interpretation of the "Waters of the United States" definition. (See the Capital Research Center publication *Green Watch*, October 2015: "'Waters of the United States,' including Creeks and Ditches.") President Trump signed another Executive Order on March 28 lifting a ban on new mine leases on federal land.

The effort to block the Pebble Mine project that occurred in previous administrations constitutes a remarkable tale of agency overreach, unethical behavior, and intrigue.

Essentially, the Pebble Project pits the environmental activist industry versus the resource industry. If the mine ends up not being permitted, the anti-minerals playbook, which includes arbitrarily circumventing the Code of the United



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States, bodes poorly for any other proposed mine in the country. Ironically, many of the minerals and metals that could be mined economically at Pebble are precisely the materials needed to propel the nation's economy forward with an eye towards "renewable" energy sources: these include wind and solar, and hybrid and electric vehicles, all of which require large amounts of copper and (in the case of solar) exotic rare earth minerals now largely supplied by China.

With Pebble, we have yet another example of empowered government agencies and entities bending "science" with the sole purpose of executing a policy. In Pebble's case, this meant imagining a mine, then blocking the imaginary mine. (More on this counter-factual convolution to come.)

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The Importance of Pebble

The Pebble Project has the potential to supply as much as one-quarter of the United States' copper needs over more than a century of production, not to mention additional significant quantities of gold, silver, molybdenum and other minerals.

Several important stakeholders, environmentalists and sportsmen are concerned that mining the deposit will despoil Bristol Bay, home of the world's largest sockeye salmon fishery. On the opposing side, investors in the Pebble Partnership obviously want the site developed, as it has been zoned for mining by the State of Alaska. Additionally, local economic issues come into play. Unemployment in south coastal Alaska has now reached epidemic levels; according to Pebble, the mine and related construction and support activity should provide around 15,000 jobs and contribute more than \$2.5 billion to the country's GDP each year.

But the problem with the development of the Pebble Mine is part of a larger "leave it in the ground" movement, and this eminently minable site has become a proxy for all undesired mining projects in the country. In 2014, the EPA was under pressure from a Native American tribe to veto an iron ore mine in Iron County, Wisconsin. Similarly, an environmental group in Minnesota lobbied against a nickel-platinum-palladium mine in the northeastern part of the state. EPA is also being urged to veto a planned nickel mine in Oregon near a tributary of the Smith River.

However, the details of these four mining projects, including Pebble, are still on the drawing boards, and they have not gone through the normal NEPA environmental impact analysis. According to the American Resources Policy Network (ARPN):

What the Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Oregon mine projects have in common is that none has put forward an actual mine plan. Neither has Pebble. Submitting a mine plan would trigger a thorough mine plan review as required under NEPA (the National Environmental Policy Act enacted by Congress in 1970). For more than 40 years NEPA has defined process by which a mine or any other resource project is evaluated. Under the law, every one of the concerns raised by the opponents to the Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Oregon mines would be aired as public comments, and examined by scientists and technical experts, before approval is granted or denied. Using the Pebble mine as precedent, anti-mining activists are urging the EPA to ignore NEPA and bar mining projects with no review necessary."

In the case of Pebble and the other projects, environmentalists are urging EPA to measure environmental impact in a way that suggests each project is a threat. As ARPN has stated:

Current law requires an environmental impact statement which is an extensive assessment of the mine's potential impact weighed against mitigating safeguards. But anti-mining activists are pushing for a switch to 'cumulative effects assessments', which would take into account past, present and future actions in the project vicinity. Under such an approach, a mine could be vetoed because other proposed mines in the region could *at some point* in the future collectively contribute to deleterious environmental effects. Even the most meticulously engineered mine plan can be undone by a parade of hypothetical horrors.

Indeed, the EPA designed a hypothetical Pebble mine in its 2014 *Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment*, which it then used to pre-empt Pebble under the Clean Water Act.

Verdict First, then Investigation

To understand what EPA did, it's necessary to go all the way back to the 1970s.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), enacted on January 1, 1970, created the President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). On December 2 of that year, President Richard Nixon, on the advice of the CEQ, created the Environmental Protection Agency.

The Clean Water Act (CWA) was passed by Congress in 1972. It establishes the basic structure for regulating pollutant discharges into the waters of the United States and gives EPA the authority to imple-



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ment pollution control programs such as setting wastewater standards for industry.

According to the EPA, it became involved in the permitting of the Pebble project in 2010 following petitions against the mine from “Native American” tribes.

Instead of having the people behind the Pebble do the required Environmental Impact Statement, the EPA substituted its own assessment of the impact of the Pebble Project on the Bristol Bay Watershed which appeared in the form of a lengthy report. In May 2012, they issued a review draft called “An Assessment of the Potential Mining Impacts on Salmon Ecosystems of Bristol Bay, Alaska.” On April 20 of that year, shares of Northern Dynasty Minerals traded at \$5.80, and the stock was considered a fairly conservative investment, and certainly a staple in many Canadian retirement accounts. After all, NAK had major backing from one of the world’s largest mining concerns, Anglo-American, investing over \$500 million into startup expenses for NAK. But by May 25, the glow had faded and NAK sold for \$2.48. In other words, the draft EPA report had stripped nearly 60 percent of the stock’s value in a month!

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Before Pebble had even considered submitting an application for a mining permit, the EPA used Section 404(c) of the Clean Water Act to preempt the mine permit application.

Savvy investors saw a pattern in the Obama administration’s use of “science” pertaining to highly politicized environmental issues. For example, a draft report assessing “global climate change” effects on the U.S. used faulty scientific models—even though the chair of the responsible committee knew of the problem, and it had also been noted by an outside reviewer. Nonetheless, the Obama administration proceeded to issue the draft report unchanged.

With regard to Pebble, agency documents and statements from EPA employees reveal the existence of an internal EPA “options paper” that make clear the agency opposed the mine on ideological grounds and had *already decided* to veto the proposal in the spring of 2010—well before it did any so-called “science.” The draft Bristol Bay report was not released until two years later.

Much of this information was unearthed through a legal discovery process, similar to demands for documents and other information before a trial. Backers of the Pebble proj-

ect sued, alleging that EPA had violated the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) by colluding with anti-Pebble activists to preemptively prevent Pebble from even applying for a permit to mine. The documents obtained during the discovery process show beyond doubt that the Pebble Project was being denied assessment by the well-established and accepted environmental decision-making mill known as the NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) process.

Clean Water Act Invoked to Halt Pebble

Under federal law, an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required for any proposed project that could have a significant environmental impact on air, land, or water, or on human health and welfare. Clearly, a large mine in sparsely populated country near federal wilderness areas, such as Pebble, would (and should) be required to submit an EIA. Small streams draining the Pebble property eventually flow into Bristol Bay, home to the world’s largest sockeye salmon fishery, though they contribute an inconsequential volume of water compared to all the other drainages into this massive bay.

But in 2010, before Pebble had even considered submitting an application for a mining permit, the EPA used a specific provision of the Clean Water Act known as Section 404(c), to preempt the mine permit application. According to the Act, the Pebble Partnership is entitled to apply for a permit and the Army Corps of Engineers has the responsibility to approve or disapprove the application. However, in a clearly unintended consequence, the EPA veto called into question the fundamental legality of preempting the issuance of a permit before the permit application had been submitted for review. This is a basic required under the Act.

How was Section 404(c) used to halt the Pebble Project? According to the EPA, the Act authorizes the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers through Section 404(a) or an approved state through Section 404(h) to issue permits for discharges of dredged or fill material at specified sites in waters of the United States. Section 404(c) further authorizes EPA to restrict, prohibit, deny, or withdraw the use of an area as a disposal site for dredged or fill material if the discharge will have unacceptable adverse effects on municipal water supplies, shellfish beds and fishery areas, wildlife, or recreational areas.

EPA believes it has “veto authority” under Section 404(c) and may initiate a public process at any time to prohibit or restrict the specification by the Army Corps or by a state, for the discharge of dredged or fill material at a particular site.

According to the Clean Water Act, Section 404(c) authority may be exercised before a permit is applied for, while

an application is *pending*, or after a permit has been *issued*. Because Section 404(c) actions have mostly been taken in response to unresolved Army Corps permit applications, this type of action is frequently referred to as “an EPA veto of a Corps permit.” Although the Army Corps authorizes approximately 68,000 permit activities in the U.S. waters each year, EPA has used its Section 404(c) authority very sparingly, exercising it only thirteen times in the forty plus year history of the Act. Section 404(c) denials were issued eleven times from 1980 to 1991, then none for almost two decades, until Pebble.

Although used sparingly EPA’s authority under Section 404(c) has been justly tempered by the courts. District Courts have overturned such determinations on a variety of project-specific grounds. However, those reversals of EPA’s determinations have *not* survived the appeal process. Legal opinions vary, but most agree that “avoiding a withdrawal of the waters at issue under 404(c) may be the best plan that the Pebble Partnership has in keeping its project alive. It has been easier for Pebble to defend such a decision in court rather than challenge an adverse decision made by EPA.”

The Strange Mine That Never Existed

EPA claims that their 2014 veto of Pebble under Section 404(c) was based on “scientific evidence” presented in the Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment, commissioned by the EPA in February 2011 and published by the agency in January 2014. This veto purported to draw its authority from the “science” behind the impacts of Pebble’s proposal on Alaska’s Bristol Bay.

However, no mining permit was applied for and therefore no submission of a mine plan design was ever made. But EPA charged a senior biological scientist named Philip North, to design a worst-case scenario fictional open-pit “hypothetical mine” that would have no chance of being approved in a review by any professional mining engineer. In fact, Pebble’s real intentions for mining the deposit and their mine plan design have remained unknown. Nevertheless, North proceeded to design his dangerous hypothetical mine with a maximum deleterious impact on the waters of Bristol Bay.

The Pebble Partnership knew it would be required to file a detailed environmental impact statement for the entire proposed mining operation along with its application. Consequently, the Pebble spent approximately \$150 million in a massive study of the biology, ecology, and dynamics of the Bristol Bay watershed.

Incredibly, EPA and Philip North simply ignored this comprehensive repository of information. Both Mr. North



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and other EPA officials have actually admitted that during the entire time that the Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment was being written (2011–2014), the study was never really intended to provide a scientific foundation for regulatory decision-making.

There’s more to this outrageous tale: While creating his hypothetically poisonous open pit mine, Mr. North, an EPA employee at the time, coached anti-Pebble activists on how to petition EPA to stop the actual mine permit application—then it seems North himself wrote the petitions. When these actions surfaced in early 2013, the U.S. House of Representatives Oversight Committee requested to speak with North about his role at EPA during the Pebble application. His response was to flee the country and turn fugitive. This resulted in a subpoena issued in August 2015 by a federal judge directing Mr. North to appear before the House Committee. The subpoena process finally caught up with North in Australia in January 2016; he was at last deposed in April 2016 by attorneys for the Pebble Partnership and staff attorneys from the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

Nearly ten years of e-mails and internal memos indicate collusion between EPA officials and environmental activists who staunchly oppose Pebble—much of which was produced in discovery. EPA’s Regional Administrator for Alaska, Dennis McLaren, was deposed in 2016 because he was thought to have played some role in Pebble’s application denial. Much has been learned through discovery about how EPA handled the Pebble Project.



Ten years of e-mails and internal memos indicate collusion between EPA officials and environmental activists who staunchly oppose Pebble.

The weight of mounting evidence from depositions and Freedom of Information Act requests regarding the complete lack of impartiality in EPA's adjudication of the Pebble Proposal over many years finally reached a critical stage in 2015. Attorneys representing the parent company of the Pebble Partnership (Northern Dynasty Minerals Ltd.) requested EPA's Inspector General conduct an investigation concerning the Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment. The material produced through legal discovery, and from FOIA requests made to EPA and others up to that time was used to construct a biased narrative. Then, the timeline of EPA activities triggered the IG investigation.

Much more information has been discovered and developed in the past three years, but the arguments made by Richard Swartz, attorney for Northern Dynasty, remain relevant:

EPA employees have been working for years to promote a veto, and now considerable evidence from heavily redacted emails indicate that the impetus for seeking a pre-emptive 404(c) veto of the Pebble Project did not come from federally recognized tribes in Alaska, as EPA has repeatedly claimed, but from agency officials themselves. This evidence, obtained under the Freedom of Information Act from EPA, suggests that EPA officials in Alaska began musing about the potential for a pre-emptive 404(c) veto of the project, and lining up other federal agencies to support this plan, some two years before the first petition was received from federally recognized tribes.

The heavily redacted emails produced by EPA have provided a glimpse into an unacknowledged EPA initiative, apparently begun by Phil North, to veto the Pebble project, to promote activist support for a veto, and to enlist other federal agencies such as the Fish and Wildlife Service to support a veto (*"This is going to happen and it's going to get bloody. I am looking forward to it!"*). This activity began secretly long before EPA received the petition that it claims caused EPA to initiate the Assessment (BBWA). Its full scope is still unknown, and warrants further investigation.

EPA's routine collaboration with Pebble opponents, while keeping others in the dark (including the Pebble Partnership, mine project supporters, and the general public) shows an agency providing special access and special treatment to Pebble opponents. Emblematic of this collaboration is the transmittal of a letter from the Administrator to Pebble Partnership's Chief Executive Officer, the only addressee of the letter, only *after* it was circulated to Pebble opponents.

The Assessment is biased to support a veto and is fundamentally flawed. EPA's own agenda and its collaboration with mine opponents have produced an Assessment that violates EPA's own policies. The Assessment is a document written to create fears of calamity without ever assessing the real likelihood of harm to the salmon in Bristol Bay. Data in the report show that the entire mine scenario will occupy about 1/20th of 1 percent of the total Bristol Bay watershed, and a similar proportion of its aquatic habitat. Even the vast 400 square mile watershed area surrounding Pebble produces only about one-half of 1 percent of the sockeye salmon upon which the Bristol Bay commercial fishery is based.

The Assessment evaluates a mine scenario co-authored by Mr. North (EPA's principal early advocate for a veto of the Pebble project) who has publicly admitted that he did not include state of the art technology because he assumed that mining companies would not use what is available. This critical flaw was recognized by numerous independent peer reviewers (selected by EPA), who said precisely the opposite—that the permitting process would require much more and better technology than what EPA used for its Assessment. This Assessment uses a mine scenario that fails to meet legal *requirements* to protect against harm to salmon, by assessing a fictional mine that does not meet modern standards for environmental protection.

By ignoring available evidence gathered by Pebble and from public sources, the Assessment authors overstated the presence of salmon living where the mine is assumed to be constructed. It assumes that no mitigation will be available based on a report by avowed mine opponents who represent anti-Pebble activists. This assumption is belied by decades of evidence about the effectiveness of salmon habitat mitigation techniques.

For scientific support, the Assessment uses numerous studies by anti-mine activists. EPA quietly commissioned Peer Reviews of seven studies authored by anti-Pebble activists, presumably in hopes of bolstering their credibility. No studies supportive of the Pebble Project received any such treatment, including the Pebble Partnership's \$150 million contribution of the most comprehensive and relevant environmental data set available on the region. When EPA quietly had seven of those studies peer reviewed, EPA's own peer reviewers found them to be biased and unreliable, but EPA used them anyway.

EPA manipulated the peer review of the Assessment itself in a way designed to minimize criticism of the Assessment. EPA violated its own standards when, during the first peer review, it unduly restricted the schedule, shielded the peer reviewers from public comments, and then held a closed-door meeting with the peer review panel. During the second peer review, EPA shut out the public entirely, completely violating its own standards for transparency.

For the first peer review, EPA provided a very narrow charge to the Peer Reviewers for their review of the initial watershed assessment draft in 2012, and limited public access to the Peer Review panel to three-minute per-person verbal presentations. EPA met with Peer Reviewers in private, refused to release their full reports on the watershed assessment document and subsequently published a significantly watered down summary report.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the Peer Reviewers gave voice to some very serious criticisms of the watershed assessment, some of which are presented in this submission. For the second draft of the watershed assessment in 2013, EPA provided its charge to Peer Reviewers in private. In fact, no public access to the Peer Reviewers was permitted whatsoever, and EPA recently reported it may publish the final draft of the watershed assessment before any Peer Review input is made public. While EPA's management of the Peer Review process in 2012 fell well short of the agency's own guidelines for such processes, the 2013 Peer Review made an open mockery of them.

In summary, Section 404(c) of the Clean Water Act was used to halt the Pebble mine from moving forward. Meanwhile, the Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment was used as a

weapon in an attempt to kill the project—a botched assassination meant to delegitimize the BBWA, according to EPA, is supposedly *based on “science.”* This mine plan fabrication is an egregious example of federal agency deception and distortion of “science” reported in a falsely “scientific assessment”—which has done more damage to the Pebble Project, and the economy of Alaska, than any other documentation produced before or since.

Scientific Shortcomings of EPA's “hypothetical” Bristol Bay Assessment

The Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment evaluates a “hypothetical mine” of EPA's own design. Specifically, EPA's “hypothetical mine” does not incorporate modern engineering design and environmental safeguards that are standard at mining projects designed and built in the United States in the 21st Century. For example, EPA's “hypothetical mine” ignores engineered seepage control features at the downstream edge of its tailings storage facility or waste rock piles. As a result, the BBWA presumes that 100 percent of “leachate” (surface and groundwater drainage from the mine) at the downstream toe of tailings embankments and 50 percent of leachate associated with waste rock piles outside of the pit drawdown zone will be lost to the environment, resulting in significant downstream water quality impacts.

Not only are seepage control systems routinely employed at modern mines to achieve downstream water quality objectives, but the *absence* of such engineered features and associated leachate losses would make EPA's “hypothetical mine” unpermitted anywhere in the U.S. That EPA would seek to predict Pebble's future impact on downstream water quality based on an unrealistic and unpermitted model truly distorts the scientific process.

EPA's assessment of the impact a future mine at Pebble would have on downstream water flows and associated aquatic habitat are equally ill-informed. First, the BBWA under-estimates by as much as 80 percent the amount of water surplus to the mine's needs that could be treated and released to augment natural flows. Second, EPA's decisions about how surplus water should be released from its “hypothetical mine” are not only arbitrary, rather they appear designed to maximize “harm” to downstream aquatic habitat. For instance, via the BBWA, EPA releases no surplus water to the stream near Pebble where fish habitat values are highest—a decision unlikely to ever occur in the real world. Clearly, the agency's poor understanding of the hydrological conditions at Pebble, and its ill-informed surplus water release strategy, *do not provide a sound scientific basis upon*



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which to assess Pebble's future potential impact on downstream aquatic habitat.

In addition, EPA's findings for Pebble also appear to violate the U.S. Data Quality Act because the agency failed to ensure the "quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity of information" used in the BBWA. Specifically, EPA refused to consider relevant and high-quality environmental data collected by the Pebble Partnership over the course of a decade at a cost of some \$150 million in preference for other less robust data sets—including those produced by paid anti-Pebble activists. By ignoring Pebble's 'Environmental Baseline Document' (EBD)—a comprehensive 27,000-page assessment of physical, chemical, biological, and social conditions in the project area—BBWA authors reach generally spurious conclusions regarding the environmental effects of mineral development at Pebble that are not supported by site-specific data.

Overall, the BBWA is less comprehensive and less definitive than a typical Environmental Impact Statement completed under NEPA. It utilizes lower quality and less relevant environmental data, and less sophisticated methodologies for assessing potential environmental impacts. In addition, a properly written NEPA EIS provides for a series or suite of decisions, including a "no action" provision—whereas the BBWA is *not* a decision-making document.

As a result of these shortcomings, the BBWA is unable to quantify any project-related impact on local fish populations or regional fisheries. Despite the glaring absence of a credible impact assessment, however, EPA used the BBWA as the

scientific basis to claim that mineral development at Pebble "will have an unacceptable adverse effect" on the fisheries resources of Bristol Bay. This led to the veto of the project under Section 404(c) of the Clean Water Act.

As previously mentioned, by EPA's own admission, the BBWA was never intended to provide a scientific foundation for any regulatory decision-making. On more than 50 occasions, EPA has stated that the final BBWA report is insufficiently comprehensive to support a regulatory decision at Pebble.

Concerns and admissions by EPA about the BBWA are best summed up by the following statements made in EPA's lengthy responses and FAQs regarding the Peer Review of the Bristol Bay Assessment:

- The assessment is based on available data and is intended as a background scientific document rather than a decision document.
- The assessment is not intended to be an environmental impact assessment.
- This (BBWA) is not a permitting document.
- The assessment is not intended to duplicate or replace a regulatory process.
- We agree that a more detailed assessment will have to be done as part of the NEPA and permitting

Circumventing the NEPA Process

In a November 4, 2015 letter to the EPA Administrator, the House Oversight Committee characterized the agency's actions regarding Pebble's rights under NEPA as "highly questionable and lacking legal basis." The Committee urged the administrator to "allow the project proposals to go forward under the Clean Water Act and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)." Indeed, EPA's veto of the Pebble project has a deeper meaning that should disturb environmentalists much more than the proposed mine: it preempted the NEPA process itself—the "Magna Carta" of environmental laws—from being triggered to study the mining proposal in detail, as thousands of proposals have been studied over the past 45 years. EPA appears to have issued their veto to avoid the "risk" of a possible NEPA-approved mining operation they could not countenance; the discovery process has clearly borne this out. EPA has set a very negative precedent by circumventing NEPA—which is responsible for its very existence.

In reality, NEPA applies whenever a proposed activity or action:

- Is proposed on federal lands, or
- Requires passage across federal lands, or
- Will be funded in part or in whole by federal money, or
- Will affect the air or water quality that is regulated by federal law.

When any one of these four conditions are present, the federal agency with the greatest expertise, regulatory authority and capacity to manage the NEPA process becomes the lead agency for that project. The EPA ostensibly would be the lead agency for a future Pebble EIS. But the Pebble mine is a high-stakes game. According to the American Resources Policy Network's President, in testimony before the House Oversight Committee:

Pebble is the largest potential copper mine in the United States. However, as a matter of public policy, Pebble should be treated no differently than any other potential resource project under the Federal permitting process established by the NEPA. EPA's Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment prior to Pebble seeking a single permit creates a chilling effect on investment in U.S. resource extraction. A preemptive permit denial based on the assessment could deprive America of reliable sources of critical metals responsibly extracted under American regulations. Every issue raised in the assessment could be reviewed within the existing NEPA process. There is no issue that requires a new pre-permitting process with the power to prevent a proposed project from entering NEPA.

Concerns about EPA side-stepping the NEPA process for the Pebble proposal are not lost on other participating agencies, such as the venerable U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). One of their scientist contributors to the BBWA stated the following:

[T]he thing that has always bothered me about the assessment (BBWA) is that there is a mechanism in place to review mine permit applications (the NEPA process). The process was created by EPA, yet the decision was made by EPA to short-circuit their own process and explore a 404(c) veto action.

From my perspective, Northern Dynasty and the Pebble Limited Partnership acted in good faith and went well beyond what would be considered

standard practice for a mine permitting exercise anywhere in the United States or in the world. I took their extraordinary effort to reflect their appreciation of the sensitivity of the environment where they are working.

The NEPA process seemed to be working perfectly fine at Pebble and I see no reason why the NEPA process should not be allowed to render a final verdict rather than having this other path bar it.

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Because of the irregularities noted above, a district court judge in May 2014 issued a preliminary injunction against any further efforts by EPA to deny Pebble its due process rights to develop and submit a permit application. This action indicates that Pebble has a better than even chance of prevailing in court against the EPA.

Based on Congressional inquiries and political pressure, the EPA decided to conduct an *internal review* regarding their own conduct during the BBWA process. The EPA charged their agency with determining whether they had conducted the BBWA in a biased manner, predetermined the outcome, and followed policies and proper procedures for ecological risk assessment, peer review, and information quality. Naturally, they found themselves innocent of all charges. Based on available information, the EPA Office of the Inspector General claimed to have found no hard evidence of bias in how the agency conducted its assessment; nor had they found that any BBWA team members predetermined the assessment outcome.

On January 13, 2016, EPA published its findings. The agency discussed how it conducted the assessment in the three primary phases discussed in their own ecological risk assessment guidelines. The review indicated that EPA's work on the assessment met requirements for peer review; provided for public involvement throughout the peer review process; and followed procedures for reviewing and verifying the quality of information in the assessment before releasing it to the public. At least that's what EPA maintained.

EPA stands by the Bristol Bay study

Government agencies have officials known as “inspectors general,” who are in charge of investigations of wrongdoing. Often, they are called “watchdogs.” The Pebble Partnership, the state of Alaska, and other parties asked for a review of the Pebble case by the EPA’s Office of Inspector General.

Specifically, the purpose was to investigate allegations of bias, predetermination of outcomes, inappropriate collusion with special interest groups, and other process abuses, all with respect to EPA’s BBWA, and the subsequent regulatory action to preemptively veto the Pebble Project under Section 404(c) of the Clean Water Act.

While acknowledging significant “scope limitations” in EPA’s review and subsequent report, the OIG concluded that it “found no evidence of bias in how the EPA conducted its assessment of the Bristol Bay watershed, or that the EPA pre-determined the assessment outcome.” It did find, however, that an EPA Region 10 employee may have been guilty of “a possible misuse of position.”

But several previous investigations of EPA conduct at Pebble contradict the OIG Report. The House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform found “that EPA employees had inappropriate contact with outside groups and failed to conduct an impartial, fact-based review of the proposed Pebble mine.”

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The House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform found “that EPA employees...failed to conduct an impartial, fact-based review of the proposed Pebble mine.”

Former U.S. Senator and Secretary of Defense William Cohen said his investigation “raise[s] serious concerns as to whether EPA orchestrated the process to reach a pre-determined outcome; had inappropriately close relationships with anti-mine advocates, and was candid about its decision-making process.”

After EPA published its internal review of the BBWA process, the Pebble Partnership in January 2016 countered with its response to EPA’s OIG report. It is the Pebble Partnership’s view that the OIG investigation into EPA miscon-

duct was so narrow as to distort the reality of the agency’s actions. Further, it is Pebble’s view that the “possible misuse of position” cited by the OIG regarding an EPA employee in Alaska underestimates the seriousness of agency misconduct. This view also holds a single individual responsible, despite evidence that senior EPA staff at Region 10 (Seattle) and at headquarters in Washington, D.C., were aware of and complicit in inappropriate activities.

A cursory review of the scope of the OIG investigation demonstrates why it was unable to expose EPA misconduct with respect to subsequent BBWA efforts to veto the Pebble Project. More than 100 EPA employees played a role in the agency’s efforts to preemptively veto Pebble, but the OIG only reviewed emails for three EPA officials. And despite the close collaboration of dozens of anti-mine activists in EPA’s actions at Pebble, the OIG only reviewed emails from one of these individuals.

The EPA’s BBWA study process was initiated in February 2011 and concluded in January 2014; the agency’s Section 404(c) veto initiated in February 2014 was suspended in November 2014 following a preliminary injunction issued by a federal court judge. But the OIG only reviewed EPA emails through May 2012! During 2-1/2 years of activity unexamined by the OIG, EPA issued two more versions of the BBWA including its final report, conducted multiple disputed peer review processes, and initiated their preemptive 404(c) veto.

One of the EPA officials was found to have no emails available for review during a 25-month period within the OIG’s already limited 52-month window of investigation. Also, the OIG did not seek to recover any emails the three identified EPA officials may have deleted prior to the onset of its investigation. Rather than review all retrieved emails, the OIG utilized undisclosed search terms to further narrow the scope of its review. Finally, the OIG did not seek records from the private email accounts of EPA officials, this despite evidence that private email accounts were used to conduct government business, a practice contrary to all federal employee protocols.

Despite its wide-ranging and potent investigative authority, the OIG issued just one subpoena with respect to its Pebble review. That subpoena, issued in August 2015 by a federal judge was directed at Phillip North, previously mentioned, who played a central role in the BBWA study. Not only did North ignore the subpoena, he is further suspect for 25 months of missing email records. Meanwhile, the OIG did not see fit to subpoena records or testimony from any of the anti-mine activists known to have collaborated closely with EPA in its efforts to veto Pebble. In fact, to force inves-

tigation of EPA actions by the OIG, Pebble Partnership reviewed more than 50,000 documents received via Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests and submitted a total of 19 letters spanning 214 pages and appending nearly 600 exhibits.

The FOIA requests addressed a wide range of concerns about EPA actions, presented corresponding evidence, and called upon the OIG to utilize its subpoena powers and other authority to more fully investigate EPA actions at Pebble. While the OIG Report finds no evidence of bias or predetermination of outcomes with respect to the BBWA, it provides no findings at all on a large number of other important matters. Nor does the OIG Report comment on the evidence provided by Pebble Partnership in raising its concerns.

Important issues raised by the Pebble Partnership but ignored by the OIG Report include the following:

- EPA had been actively considering a pre-emptive veto of the Pebble Project for several years before receiving a petition from six federally recognized Native American tribes to take such action. Despite this, and the fact that EPA actually helped prepare the tribal petition, the federal agency continues to this day to cite that petition as the sole catalyst for its actions at Pebble.
- EPA actively involved outside special interests (anti-mine activists) in preparing an internal agency document—an “Options Paper”—to guide federal decision making at Pebble.
- EPA actively and intensively collaborated with anti-mine activists over a period of years to develop the political strategy, the legal/policy strategy, and the scientific record necessary to veto the Pebble Project.
- EPA lobbied other federal agencies to support a preemptive veto of the Pebble Project.
- EPA knowingly selected authors and contributors for the BBWA who had openly expressed their opposition to development at Pebble.
- The senior EPA official leading the BBWA study was personally opposed to development at Pebble. He admitted at the outset of the study process that “politics are as big or bigger factor” than science in pursuing a preemptive 404(c) veto.
- EPA secretly peer reviewed studies prepared by anti-mine activists and prominently cited them throughout the BBWA, despite significant concerns expressed by peer reviewers regarding these studies.
- EPA failed to peer review the robust environmental studies prepared by Pebble Partnership, and generally ignored these studies (the most comprehensive scientific record available) in its BBWA.
- EPA lied to the Pebble Partnership, to the State of Alaska, and to scientific peer reviewers as to whether the BBWA would be used as a basis for regulatory action at Pebble.
- EPA developed and reviewed hypothetical mine scenarios in the BBWA that do not employ modern mining practices and technologies; are fundamentally not permitted under U.S. and Alaska law; were designed to demonstrate “unacceptable adverse effects.” All this to justify a preemptive veto of the Pebble Project.
- In devising the BBWA, EPA relied heavily upon a scientist who has admitted to intentional and serious wrongdoing in connection with environmental litigation in the past.
- EPA regularly met with and accepted scientific and other input from anti-mine activists outside of BBWA comment windows, while refusing to do so with groups and individuals supportive of the Pebble Project.
- EPA officials intentionally sought to shield documents and email communication from FOIA requests.
- EPA may have violated the Anti-Lobbying Act by utilizing anti-mine activists to lobby in support of a 404(c) preemptive veto of the Pebble Project.
- The OIG report found one instance of “possible misuse of position” with respect to the actions of Philip North who served as technical lead for the BBWA and was a central figure in the agency’s consideration of the 404(c) veto. This finding is in relation to North’s use of a private email account in 2011 to coordinate with an anti-mine activist in the preparation of a tribal petition that has since been cited by EPA as the sole catalyst for its BBWA study and preemptive 404(c) regulatory action.

The OIG report declared that North acted alone in this collusion, and that the “employee’s supervisor told us that he was not aware that the employee had taken such an action.” However, the OIG fails to note the many other substantive interactions North had with anti-mine activists or the extent to which this collusion was known throughout the agency.

For example:

Evidence shows Mr. North collaborated with anti-mine activists on numerous occasions, including to draft internal EPA policy documents and to develop the agency's strategy to preemptively veto Pebble.

- Evidence shows that at least six EPA employees knew about the improper collusion between Mr. North and anti-mine activists. As early as 2010, at least two EPA employees alerted senior EPA staff and an EPA attorney about these inappropriate contacts, but no corrective action was taken.
- In 2013, Mr. North retired from EPA and subsequently left the country with his young family, twice cancelling agreed upon dates to provide testimony to Congressional committees. North's legal counsel refused to accept a subpoena issued by the OIG on his behalf.
- Mr. North is not the only EPA official for whom existing evidence demonstrates close collaboration with anti-mine activists in advancing the agency's plans to preemptively veto the Pebble Project.

Finally, the EPA Office of Inspector General's review and findings of agency actions with respect to Alaska's Pebble Project are so narrow as to materially distort the true story of what happened. Congress has authority to provide oversight for inspectors general where an inspector general fails to uncover or report clear misconduct on the part of an agency.

The Latest Chapter

The legal discovery and deposition process drags on and on after the original EPA veto in 2010. Seven years have elapsed without the NEPA process being invoked.

It was generally expected that the new Trump Administration would be more favorable to Pebble. But the first salvo came from Congress. It took the form of February 22 message from the House Committee on Science, Space and Technology to the new EPA administrator:

The Committee recommends that the incoming administration rescind the EPA's proposed determination to use Section 404(c) in a preemptive fashion for the Pebble Mine in Bristol Bay, Alaska. This simple action will allow a return to the long-established Clean Water Act permitting process—along with NEPA—and stop attempts by the EPA to improperly expand its authority. Moreover, it will create regulatory certainty for future development projects that will create jobs and contribute to the American economy.

On May 12, 2017, Pebble's parent company (Northern Dynasty) and the EPA at last reached a settlement which paves the way for the implementation of the NEPA. This agreement followed a separate April 2017 agreement with the State of Alaska's Department of Natural Resources that approved the land use permit needed by Northern Dynasty to conduct reclamation and monitoring activities at the Pebble site over the next 12 months. The Pebble Mine proposal has now been rerouted to the level playing field called NEPA law.

Looking back over the convoluted saga of Pebble, one aspect stands starkly highlighted: EPA manipulated the process, ignoring standards of scientific integrity. However, EPA can still intervene even after the Corps of Engineers makes its decision on Pebble's environmental impact statement. Thus the future of the Pebble project is still at the mercy of the political process, mostly in places like Washington, D.C., far, far away from Alaska and its people. ■

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DISSENTING CATHOLIC CHARITIES

By Steve Warner

Summary: Dissent has been with the Catholic Church from the very beginning. But since the Vatican II council in the 1960s, left-wing dissenters have sought to steer American Catholics towards far-left causes—and away from the Church—under the guise of fake Catholicism.

Some who had come down from Judea were instructing the brothers, “Unless you are circumcised according to the Mosaic practice, you cannot be saved.” (Acts 15:1)

And so it began. This passage from the Acts of the Apostles reports how some early Christians contradicted official Church teaching, which had declared circumcision unnecessary for Christians. Thus, dissent has been with the Catholic Church from the very beginning. In his Second Letter to Timothy, Saint Paul warned:

For the time will come when people will not tolerate sound doctrine but, following their own desires and insatiable curiosity, will accumulate teachers and will stop listening to the truth and will be diverted to myths. (2 Timothy 4:3-4)

Since the “Circumcisers,” the Church has had Gnostics, Montanists, Sabellianists, Arians, and Pelagians—and that was just in the first five centuries. But this is not a lesson in early Church history; clearly, strong and sometimes widespread dissent among believers is nothing new to the Catholic Church. But the spread of dissent has been facilitated by the mass communications revolution of the twentieth century and the emergence of the World Wide Web at the turn of the last millennium.

Today, scores of charitable organizations claiming to be Catholic are in open rebellion against the Church or collaborate with other organizations whose activities violate fundamental Church teachings. Orthodox Catholics find the following conundrum especially worrisome: The same mass communications that have fostered dissent have also made it easy for anyone to learn what the Church actually holds true—and yet radical dissent increases. Quite possibly many self-described Catholics aren’t really Catholic after all.



Credit: American Life League. License: <https://goo.gl/vmUJdu>.

Since the “Circumcisers,” the Church has had Gnostics, Montanists, Sabellianists, Arians, and Pelagians—and that was just in the first five centuries.

Vatican II, *Humanae Vitae*, and the “Seamless Garment”

While the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) introduced changes in many practical and liturgical matters, it did not—and indeed *could not*—change fundamental church teachings. This basic limitation to reform, however has not stopped dissenters from using the Council’s example to push their own radical agendas under the pretense of being guided by the “spirit of Vatican II” following the Council’s closing ceremonies on December 8, 1965. Enabling these dissenters have been a sizeable number of errant priests, nuns, and even bishops who have not only tolerated the most radical kind of dissent among their sheep, but in many instances, have actually joined them.

An especially egregious example of this radicalization—and one with lasting consequences for the Church—occurred during the years immediately following Vatican II. The Council’s “spirit” had led many a parish priest to intimate that it would not be long before the Church gave up her

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“prohibition” on artificial contraception. Pope Paul VI’s 1968 Encyclical Letter, *Humanae Vitae*, however, put the lie to this false promise by reaffirming that “any action which either before, at the moment of, or after sexual intercourse, is specifically intended to prevent procreation” violates the will of God. But the damage had already been done and today somewhere between 50 and 80 percent of self-identified Catholics in the United States support the use of artificial contraceptives—and many use them, of course. (See “Voice of the People” survey conducted by Univision in February 2014, and “Key findings about American Catholics,” Pew Research Center, published September 2, 2015.) And because these Catholics believe the Church is “out of step” on contraception, they are increasingly inclined to believe that the Church is wrong on other matters of personal “choice,” such as abortion and same-sex marriage.



“[T]he image of the ‘seamless garment’ has been used by some theologians and Catholic politicians, in an intellectually dishonest manner...” — Archbishop Gerhard Müller

Here’s a last bit of ecclesiastical history for context before we turn to a discussion of the dissenting organizations in question:

In December 1983, Chicago Archbishop Joseph Cardinal Bernardin gave a speech at Fordham University in which he proposed a “consistent ethic of life” on a spectrum of issues, from the intrinsic evils of abortion and euthanasia, to nuclear war, capital punishment, illegal immigration, homelessness, and unemployment. In a follow-up lecture at St. Louis University a few months later, Bernardin described this ethic as a “seamless garment,” a phrase presumably borrowed from Eileen Egan, a Catholic peace activist, who coined it during a conversation with British author, critic, and eventual Catholic convert Malcolm Muggeridge in 1971. The reference is, of course, Biblical. In John 19:23, the seamless tunic of Jesus is not torn by his executioners. Egan held that consistency required Catholics to oppose capital punishment, abortion, and war in all its manifestations, including expenditures for nuclear weapons.

While Bernardin clarified in St. Louis that he was not proposing a moral equivalence between the taking of innocent human life and other “life” issues, his statements have had, according to some Catholic commentators, an unfortunate

outcome. Archbishop Gerhard Müller has pointed out that, “the image of the ‘seamless garment’ has been used by some theologians and Catholic politicians, in an intellectually dishonest manner...” (“Pontificia Academia pro Vita: Human Life in some Documents of the Magisterium,” February 22, 2013.) The good archbishop could have added the highest levels of Church leadership to his list of dishonest practitioners: In August 2015, after Planned Parenthood was exposed by Project Veritas as a peddler of aborted baby parts, Chicago Cardinal Blase Cupich opined in his city’s *Tribune*, “we should be no less appalled by the indifference toward the thousands of people who die daily for lack of decent medical care; who are denied rights by a broken immigration system and by racism; who suffer in hunger, joblessness and want...”

And so the Church hierarchy itself, regardless of Bernardin’s intentions, sets the dissenting example for others by draping a “seamless garment” over dissent itself.

The Dissenters

Dissent in progressive U.S. Catholic charities manifests itself in a variety of organizations, all of which, however, seem to share a common ancestor in far-left agitator Saul Alinsky’s model of community organizing. From the highest levels of the bishops’ own charities to the most radical heterodox organizations, much of the leadership and rank-and-file cut their teeth on the streets of Chicago in the 1960s and 1970s, working for or with groups like the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) where future President Barack Obama got his start.

Dissenting organizations can be broadly categorized as follows:

The Heterodox

Extremely proud dissenters who reject one or more of the Church’s teachings while still claiming to be faithful Catholics. These organizations are focused on abortion, birth control, homosexuality, and women’s ordination.

Social Justice Reformers

Focused on poverty, human rights, and war, supposedly in the “tradition of Catholic social teaching.” These groups tend to be sympathetic toward the heterodox, but are careful to avoid heresy themselves.

Sex Abuse Organizations

Created to address the child sex-abuse crisis in the Church and hold accountable abusing priests and the bishops who

covered for them, some of these organizations have evolved into forums for general dissent and heterodoxy.

Political Organizations

Typically created during U.S. presidential elections, these groups provide political cover for dissenting Catholic candidates and legislation at odds with Catholic teaching.

USCCB Charities

The two charities run by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops: Catholic Campaign for Human Development and Catholic Relief Services.

USCCB-Endorsed Charities

Large national and international charities that work closely with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Heterodox Organizations

Camouflaging their essentially anti-Catholic agendas as “reform,” many supposedly Catholic organizations actually seek to change unchangeable Church teachings.

In a glowing 2002 tribute to these dissidents, Angela Bonavoglia wrote in *The Nation*, a leading secular Left journal, “In the spirit of the Second Vatican Council, the progressive reform groups embrace a broad agenda. They want women at all levels of ministry and decision-making; married clergy; optional celibacy; acceptance of homosexuals, the divorced and the remarried... and an affirmation of conscience as the final arbiter in moral matters.”

The heterodox come in two types: single-issue organizations focused on “reproductive rights,” homosexuality, and women’s “ordination,” and general reformers who have longer lists of demands. Some are extremely well-funded and receive the attention that only money can buy, and others, while boot-strapping it, nonetheless, get more attention from a sympathetic media than their meager budgets and memberships deserve.

By far the best-funded is Catholics for Choice (CFC), an organization of self-identified Catholics who do not recognize the authority of the Catholic Church on abortion or contraception, support even controversial late-term abortions, and launch publicity efforts deliberately antagonistic toward the Catholic Church.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) strongly rejects CFC’s identification as a Catholic organization and has stated that the organization promotes positions irreconcilable with Catholic teaching. (For more information, see the May 10, 2000 press release, “NCCB/

USCC President Issues Statement on Catholics for a Free Choice.”) But this opposition has not stopped some of the nation’s largest foundations from sustaining the organization with grants of tens of millions of dollars. Between 2006 and 2014, CFC received over \$18 million from the Susan Thompson Buffett Foundation, as well as large donations from the William & Flora Hewlett Foundation (\$5,735,500), Ford Foundation (\$2,650,000), and the Huber Foundation (\$1,155,000). CFC’s net assets in 2015 were over \$12 million!

Organizations proselytizing for “LGBTQ equality” in the Church include Dignity USA, New Ways Ministry, and Fortunate Families. Dignity USA proclaims on its website its support for “sacramental marriage” for same-sex couples.

In 2015, Dignity hosted atheist homosexual sex columnist Dan Savage as a keynote speaker at their national convention. Savage had earned a reputation as a crude provocateur for his sex-advice column “Savage Love” and for his obscene attacks on Pope Benedict XVI, Rick Santorum, Ben Carson, and others. (Savage’s comments are too explicit for this publication, but you can easily find his remarks with a quick Internet search.) Dignity executive director Marianne Duddy-Burke said Savage was invited to “speak on how his Catholic roots have influenced his advocacy and his actions.”

Since 2008, Dignity has received over \$700,000 in grants from the Arcus Foundation, the progressive organization that (according to its website) “advocates for change to ensure that LGBT people and our fellow apes thrive in a world where social and environmental justice are a reality.”



By constantly questioning Church teaching on homosexuality and refusing to clarify their formal position, Father Robert Nugent, SDS, and Sister Jeannine Gramick, SSND quickly ran afoul of the local archbishop.

Credit: Wiam i Tezza. License: <https://goo.gl/B7p7Xm>.

With 2016 assets of \$859,646, New Ways Ministry seeks to “combat personal and structural homophobia and transphobia... and promote the acceptance of LGBT people as full and equal members of church and society.” The organization was founded in 1977 by Father Robert Nugent, SDS, and Sister Jeannine Gramick, SSND. Constantly questioning Church teaching on homosexuality and refusing to clarify their formal position, the priest and nun quickly ran afoul of the local archbishop. In 1999, the Vatican issued a fifteen-hundred word “notification” that Father Nugent and Sister Gramick were “permanently prohibited from any pastoral work involving homosexual persons and... ineligible, for an undetermined period, for any office in their respective religious institutes.”



National Coalition of American Nuns is run by notoriously “pro-choice” Sinsinawa Dominican Sister Donna Quinn, who has somehow managed to evade excommunication.

More recently, the USCCB has affirmed and reaffirmed that New Ways Ministry is not and never has been “authorized to speak on behalf of the Catholic Church or to identify itself as a Catholic organization.” Yet the “ministry” lives on, advocating for “marriage equality” and transgender rights. This past November, on All Saints’ Day, New Ways outed the “queer” saints. These supposedly include Saint Francis of Assisi, Saint John of the Cross and, absurdly, St. Augustine famous for having had a mistress and at least one illegitimate child.

New Ways is also a beneficiary of Arcus Foundation’s generosity and shared a grant with Dignity in 2014 “to influence and counter the narrative of the Catholic Church and its ultra-conservative affiliates.”

There are several 501(c)(3) and membership organizations demanding that the Church ordain women priests. Among these are Roman Catholic Womenpriests, Association of Roman Catholic Women Priests (ARCWP), Women’s Ordination Worldwide (WOW), and Women’s Ordination Conference. Roman Catholic Womenpriests even began coordinating the “ordination” of women in 2002. The organization claims there are about 200 priestesses “legitimately” ordained by current Catholic bishops whose names the organization will not reveal until the prelates die. Many of these priestesses were quickly declared excommunicated by

their bishops, and on May 29, 2008, the Vatican published a general decree that any woman who attempts to receive holy orders or any bishop who attempts to confer holy orders on a woman is automatically excommunicated.

Other heterodox Catholic organizations seek more extensive reform in the Church. While most of them advocate for priestesses, recognition of same-sex marriage, birth control, etc., their missions cast a wider net. These organizations include Call to Action, Pax Christi, Women-Church Convergence, FutureChurch, American Catholic Council, Association for the Rights of Catholics in the Church, 8th Day Center for Justice, Catholic Church Reform International, and Catholic Coalition for Church Reform.

Catholic Organizations for Renewal (COR) is a leadership forum of U.S. church reform organizations to which these organizations belong. COR’s goal is to “further reform and renewal in the Roman Catholic Church, to build an inclusive church, to bring about a world of justice and peace and to reflect the sacredness of all creation.” Perhaps the best illustration of the subversive goals of these organizations is the “Charter of the Rights of Catholics in the Church,” drafted by the Association for the Rights of Catholics in the Church and endorsed by the COR member organizations. These “rights” include, but are certainly not limited to the following:

- All Catholics have the right to follow their informed consciences in all matters
- Officers of the Church have the right to teach on matters both of private and public morality only after wide consultation with the faithful
- All Catholics have the right to a voice in all decisions that affect them, including the choosing of their leaders
- All Catholics, regardless of canonical status (lay or clerical), sex or sexual orientation, have the right to exercise all ministries in the Church for which they are adequately prepared

Unitarians and other fringe Protestant denominations might be proud of such a platform; Catholics, not so much.

Heterodoxy comes from within the Church as well. Founded in 1969 and claiming over 2,000 members, the National Coalition of American Nuns (NCAN) seeks “full acceptance of the fact that: *A woman cannot have full autonomy unless she has Reproductive Autonomy.*” NCAN is run by notoriously “pro-choice” Sinsinawa Dominican Sister Donna Quinn, who has somehow managed to evade excommunication.

Social Justice Reformers

While the social justice organizations share many goals with the heterodox, they tend to walk a fine line with regard to the teachings of the Church. Many attempt to stay within the good graces of the bishops and the Vatican. They typically avoid abortion, birth control, and homosexuality and stay focused on broader issues such as peace, poverty, racism, affordable housing, income inequality, unemployment, the death penalty, immigration, human trafficking, and climate change—in other words, they frequently support Democratic legislation, and protest Republican policies. These organizations include Franciscan Action Network, Catholics for Peace and Justice, Ignatian Solidarity Network, Marianist Social Justice Collaborative, and Network Lobby. The social justice organizations include many priests, nuns, and bishops among their members and frequently work closely with the USCCB and local dioceses.

One example of the semantic games these organizations play to stay out of trouble with the Vatican comes from the Marianists who say on their website, “Our goal is to fully welcome our Marianist LGBT members into all aspects of our communities.” Ambiguous, while still signaling where their loyalties lie. When they do go out on a limb, the leaders of these organizations are quick to qualify their public statements. Simone Campbell, Network Lobby executive director, is a master at this verbal obfuscation. When pressed on whether abortion should be illegal, she deflects, “That’s beyond my pay grade,” or changes the subject: “...the thing that we need to face is that women choose abortion often, or most often, because they don’t have economic options,” she says.

Sex Abuse Organizations

Several organizations were founded in response to the sexual abuse crisis in the Catholic Church. The two most active and prominent are Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) and Voice of the Faithful (VOTF). Regardless of their initial objectives and good work, both organizations are or have been led by dissenting Catholics and have morphed into forums for heterodoxy.

Barbara Blaine founded SNAP in 1988 “after coming to terms with her own molestation at the hands of a later defrocked priest, Chet Warren.” Before this, she had run a homeless shelter on the south side of Chicago. Blaine was a featured speaker at the 2012 “Women, Money, Power Forum” hosted by Feminist Majority, a radical group that is pro-abortion and same-sex marriage. There, she shared the dais with Feminist Majority president Eleanor Smeal and Planned Parenthood vice president Dawn Laguens.

SNAP’s first national director, David Clohessy, was a former ACORN organizer who made his opinions of the Church clear in a 2011 email to an alleged victim, “I sure hope you DO pursue the WI [Wisconsin] bankruptcy ... Every nickle [sic] they don’t have is a nickle [sic] that they can’t spend on defense lawyers, PR staff, gay-bashing, women-hating, contraceptive-battling, etc.”

On January 17, 2017, a former SNAP employee and abuse victim Gretchen Hammond filed a lawsuit against the organization alleging she had been fired for whistleblowing: Hammond claimed she had uncovered evidence that SNAP was accepting kickbacks for referring sex abuse victims to attorneys and had been fired upon questioning this practice. According to the lawsuit, of the \$440,000 in total 2003 donations to SNAP, 54 percent came in the form of kickbacks from plaintiff’s sex abuse attorneys. Hammond also claimed that SNAP “is motivated largely by the personal animus of its directors and officers against the Catholic Church.” Clohessy resigned from SNAP on January 24, 2017, followed by Blaine on February 4. Both claimed their resignations had nothing to do with the lawsuit. Blaine died in September 2017, and Clohessy, personally named in the lawsuit, awaits his fate.

Voice of the Faithful began as “listening sessions” in 2002 for parishioners at St. John the Evangelist Church in Wellesley, Massachusetts, to discuss their concerns about the sex-abuse scandal. Today VOTF has more than 30,000 members and holds an annual conference for more than 4,000 attendees. While VOTF claims that it does not have a “hidden agenda” and that the organization is “in no way heretical,” a great many of its leaders, advisors, and speakers are notorious dissenters and the organization has close ties to the heterodox organizations Call to Action, We Are Church, and Dignity USA.

In 2002, bishops in Massachusetts, Maine, Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey announced they would not allow VOTF to meet on Church property. Newark Archbishop John Myers labeled the group “anti-Church and, ultimately, anti-Catholic,” and Bridgeport Bishop William Lori accused VOTF of “private dissenting opinions.”

Political Organizations

During the 2016 presidential election, Wikileaks published a number of damning emails from the account of Hillary Clinton’s campaign chairman, John Podesta, when he was still head of the left-wing Center for American Progress. The emails revealed that Podesta helped create Catholic front groups for the Democratic Party as early as 2005, in an



Credit: Center for American Progress. License: <https://goo.gl/18ZIN9u>.

The Wikileaks emails revealed that John Podesta helped create Catholic front groups for the Democratic Party as early as 2005, in an effort to undermine the authority of the Catholic Church and the U.S. bishops.

effort to undermine the authority of the Catholic Church and the U.S. bishops and to swing mainstream Catholic voters towards his leftist political agenda.

In one 2011 e-mail, Sanford “Sandy” Newman of Voices for Progress wrote Podesta suggesting, “There needs to be a Catholic Spring” to further separate American Catholics from their bishops regarding artificial contraception. In response, Podesta, who is at least nominally Catholic, replied, “We created Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good to organize for a moment like this.... Likewise Catholics United.” The two organizations would prove to be instrumental in helping Barack Obama win the Catholic vote in 2008.

“The role of Catholics United and Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good was to obscure the debate over abortion as much as possible by propagandizing to the effect that Barack Obama...was the ‘real’ pro-life candidate because he intended to reduce the rate of abortion through anti-poverty measures,” wrote Anne Hendershott for *The Catholic World Report*.

Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good (CACG) is a 501(c)(3) charity backed by hundreds of thousands of dollars from billionaire leftist George Soros, himself of Hungarian-Jewish extraction. CACG’s first chairman, Fred Rotondaro, also a senior fellow at Podesta’s Center for American Progress, advocated for priestesses and said, “gay sex comes from God.” The organization’s founding director was

Alexia Kelley, who had previously worked for the USCCB’s Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) where she helped send more than seven million dollars to ACORN.

Catholics United is a 501(c)(4) “social welfare” organization created by community organizer and Democratic apparatchik Chris Korzen. The organization has defended pro-abortion Catholic politicians and denounced Catholic efforts to defend traditional marriage. Catholics United has received most of its funding from the Gill Foundation, a generous funder of LGBT causes whose motto is “To Advance Equality for LGBT Americans, Further, Faster.” Korzen was also instrumental in getting Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good up and running; his salary was paid from donations to that organization.

Both organizations seem to have gone into hibernation for now. Their websites are down and CACG only posts to its Facebook page occasionally. But odds are one or more will be back and active in some form before the 2020 presidential election. “One of the ways you can tell it is a national election year,” mused Anne Hendershott, “is left-wing Catholic political organizations re-emerge with new strategies, new funding, and sometimes even new names.”

USCCB Charities

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) is a domestic anti-poverty program run by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) with the mission “to break the cycle of poverty by helping low-income people participate in decisions that affect their lives, families and communities.” CCHD is primarily funded through an annual collection taken up in November in participating dioceses. Twenty-five percent of every local collection typically stays with that diocese or archdiocese. The remaining seventy-five percent is sent to the national CCHD office, which then distributes larger national grants mainly at its discretion. 2015 nationwide collections amounted to \$9,763,744.

CCHD was founded in 1969. Since then, much has been revealed about the early organization’s close ties to the infamous “father” of community organizing, Saul Alinsky. In particular, the reader is encouraged to take a look at Lawrence Engel’s 1998 article for *Theological Studies*, “The Influence of Saul Alinsky on the Campaign for Human Development,” and Michael Voris’s lecture for Church Militant, “CCHD & Alinsky.” Even today CCHD is not shy in showcasing its radically progressive DNA. “The belief that those who are directly affected by *unjust systems and*



Credit: Forward Boldly/YouTube screenshot. License: <https://goo.gl/82i5nq>.

In 2010, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops implemented “stronger policies and clearer mechanisms to screen and monitor grants and groups” in hopes past violations would not be repeated.

structures have the best insight into knowing how to change them is central to CCHD,” proclaims the organization’s website mission page [emphasis added].

Since its founding, CCHD has continually funded radical and Marxist organizations including many that promote abortion, birth control, and homosexuality. Orthodox Catholics have complained over the years about the essentially anti-Catholic CCHD to no avail. Some hope for change came at last in 2009, when Michael Hichborn, founder and current president of the Lepanto Institute, first started investigating the CCHD’s activities. While working for American Life League, Hichborn created and led a coalition called Reform CCHD Now, which put enough pressure on the USCCB that it was forced to take at least nominal action.

On September 15, 2010, the USCCB approved a “Review and Renewal” that put in place “stronger policies and clearer mechanisms to screen and monitor grants and groups” in hopes past violations would not be repeated. Also, it added a provision that “CCHD will not fund groups that are members of coalitions which have as part of their organizational purpose or coalition agenda, positions or actions that contradict fundamental Catholic moral and social teaching.”

The very next year, however, American Life League found that of the 192 grants funded by CCHD, 74 grantees in 46 dioceses still in some way promoted homosexuality, abortion, or birth control. And approximately \$2.9 million was given to 27 organizations that were found to directly violate CCHD guidelines, and another 45 organizations were members—some of them founding members—of coalitions that advocate abortion, homosexuality, or birth control.

Later in 2011, Hichborn contacted CCHD Director Ralph McCloud and scheduled a meeting to discuss American Life League’s findings. But three days before the meeting was to occur McCloud’s office canceled saying, “we see no reason to meet at this time.” CCHD continues to claim that it is no longer funding organizations that oppose Church teachings, but as recently as 2016 Hichborn found yet more grantees that fund homosexual rights advocacy, including same-sex marriage.

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) supposedly “carries out the commitment of the Bishops of the United States to assist the poor and vulnerable overseas.” In 2016, the organization’s operating revenues were \$917 million. A staggering 78 percent (\$714 million) of these revenues came from “public support,” for which the U.S. federal government provided more than \$314 million. Other public sources included foreign governments and international organizations such as the United Nations, The Global Fund, and the World Bank. This reliance on public funding is distressing, as CRS is essentially making grants and providing services without full autonomy and control.

Not surprisingly, CRS has been caught numerous times over the last ten years supporting organizations whose missions and activities conflict with the fundamental teachings of the Catholic Church. In July 2012, LifeSite News reported that CRS’s largest grant in 2010 (\$5.3 million) was provided to CARE, an international organization that actively provides artificial contraceptives to women in developing countries and supports pro-abortion groups and legislation. In 2013, the American Life League, Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute, Human Life International, and the Population Research Institute publicly criticized CRS for a \$2.8-million anti-malaria grant to Population Services International, which also pushes artificial contraception and abortion in the developing world.



Catholics have their own international organization, the Church, with its own moral principles.

CRS has responded to these and other complaints in a number of unsatisfactory ways. First, the organization claims that the grants it provides are non-fungible and, therefore, must be used for the purposes for which they were intended—which CRS claims never conflict with Church teaching. Secondly, because CRS is frequently a “pass through” funder, it

does not always get to choose which organizations ultimately get to provide the services CRS is funding. So, for instance, in Guinea, it was not CRS, they said, that chose Population Services International, but the “Country Coordinating Mechanism,” an organization made up of local leaders from government and civil society.

The fungibility claim is dubious. As Dr. Jeff Mirus at Catholic Culture points out, “money is intrinsically fungible, and restrictions on the use of funds will be significant only if the availability of funds in one area does not free up other funds for use in other areas.” A more significant reaction to CRS’s response that directly challenges their “pass through” defense also comes from Mirus in a strongly worded statement:

“[T]he continuing reliance of Catholic Relief Services on government funds is not only the elephant in the room, but the woolly mammoth.... Catholics cannot put themselves in the position of passing out grants and providing services which are funded, and therefore controlled, by others, especially the State. Catholics have their own international organization, the Church, with its own moral principles. The Church has dedicated personnel capable of reaching anywhere Catholic action is permitted, and some places where it is not permitted. The Church should control her own pipeline of funding and activity from beginning to end.”

More recently, the Lepanto Institute found that CRS *directly* funded the advocacy and distribution of artificial contraception in Kenya through the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and dispensed millions of contraceptives, abortifacients, and sterilization kits through USAID’s Project AXXes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. These accusations are extremely well-researched and significantly more damning. CRS denies any wrongdoing and the back-and-forth between the organization and Lepanto and other critics continues today. Says Lepanto’s Hichborn, “What this is really about is the USCCB lobbying Congress to maintain large amounts of funding to PEPFAR and USAID, so that its project, CRS, can continue to receive large government grants. It’s all a quid pro quo.”

USCCB-Endorsed Charities

Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA) is a national ministry of 164 member agencies serving 8.7 million “poor and vulnerable persons” through 2,631 locations. With \$3.9 billion in revenue in 2015, CCUSA took the ninth position in the latest *Forbes 100 Largest U.S. Charities*. And with a growing

portion of its revenue coming from government (44 percent in 2015), Catholic critics have long accused the organization of being just “another arm of the welfare state.”

In 1997, Senator Rick Santorum (R-Pa.) complained that, “The number one opponent, and perhaps the most effective opponent, of welfare reform was Catholic Charities.” Adds Brian C. Anderson in a 2000 article in *City Journal*, “Catholic Charities USA is one of the nation’s most powerful advocates for outworn welfare-state ideas, especially the idea that social and economic forces over which the individual has no control, rather than his own attitudes and behavior, are the reason for poverty.”

Anderson’s article goes on to reveal a deep and problematic history of CCUSA:

Swept up in the decade’s tumult and encouraged by the modernizing spirit of the second Vatican Council, Catholic Charities rejected its long-standing emphasis on personal responsibility and self-reliance and began to blame capitalist society rather than individual behavior for poverty and crime.... Ratified at Catholic Charities’ annual meeting in 1972, the so-called Cadre Study totally abandoned any stress on personal responsibility in relation to poverty and other social ills. Instead, it painted America as an unjust, “numb” country, whose oppressive society and closed economy cause people to turn to crime or drugs or prostitution. Moreover, the study asserts, individual acts of charity are useless. We must instead unearth “the root causes of poverty and oppression” and radically reconstruct... the social order to avert social upheaval.

In addition to its welfare state credentials, CCUSA, like CCHD and CRS, is associated with organizations whose missions and activities conflict with the teachings of the Catholic Church. LifeSite News reported in May 2013 that CCUSA was a dues-paying member of the Coalition on Human Needs (CHN), an organization that advocates for public funding of abortion. (Editor’s note: The Coalition on Human Needs contacted us to claim that they have “never advocated for public funding for abortion.” But LifeSite News described them that way because of their staunch defense of government funding for Planned Parenthood, the nation’s largest provider of abortion. For example, CHN lobbies to protect Title X funds for “family planning” provided by Planned Parenthood and others. Planned Parenthood itself has bragged that one-third of all recipients of Title X services use their clinics.)



Sister Jeanine Gramick told the Washington Blade that Catholic Charities has “been the most progressive wing of the church other than the nuns...”

Furthermore, reported LifeSite, CCUSA’s senior director of policy and legislative affairs, Lucreda Cobbs, sat on CHN’s board as a representative for CCUSA in 2011, when CHN was fighting against potential cuts to federal funding of Planned Parenthood and Title X family planning. And in August 2013, American Life League reported that CCUSA president Fr. Larry Snyder was a member of the board of America’s Promise Alliance, which promotes homosexual activism and artificial birth control.

Heterodox Sister Jeannine Gramick, the Catholic nun from New Ways Ministry covered earlier in this article, told the *Washington Blade*, “America’s LGBT News Source,” that Catholic Charities has “been the most progressive wing of the church other than the nuns.... In some cases, Catholic Charities USA has supported our events. I feel they personally are pro-gay, but they can’t do this publicly.”

In 2006, the USCCB in conjunction with 16 national partners, including Catholic Relief Services and Catholic Charities USA, created Catholic Climate Covenant (CCC) “to address growing ecological awareness and the need to implement Catholic social teaching on ecology within the US Church.” CCC helps “guide the U.S. Church’s response to the moral call for action on climate change.”

Navigating the pages of CCC’s website reveals that the organization is essentially just another left-wing group demanding aggressive government solutions to insoluble problems. A brief listing of CCC’s 2017 official statements provides some insight into the organization’s very political positions on climate change:

15,000 Catholics Petition President Trump on Climate Change

Catholics Raise Moral Concerns about Proposed Budgetary Cuts to EPA

Bishop Pates to Reporters: Cuts to Environmental Protection Agency are “Suicidal”

Promoting the Common Good: Trump’s Executive Order Fails at Both

In a December 2016 article in *The San Diego Union-Tribune* entitled, “Catholic leaders: climate change on same level as abortion and death penalty,” CCC director of programs Sarah Spengeman was quoted, “It’s clear that climate change is a pro-life issue. If we want to leave our children an inhabitable earth, if we have a responsibility to the unborn, we have a responsibility to act on climate.”

In 2016, Lepanto’s Hichborn reviewed Spengeman’s social media accounts and discovered that she is a member of the pro-choice EMILY’s group on LinkedIn, and she has “liked” eleven LGBT groups and four pro-women’s ordination groups on Facebook.

Conclusion

The history of dissenting “Catholic” organizations since Vatican II is deep, complex, and often troubling. Some of the groups covered in this article have done and continue to do good work—especially when they provide direct aid to people suffering from hunger, poverty, or natural disaster. But that does not make up for the millions of dollars squandered on community organizing and other “poverty prevention” schemes that promote socialism, the huge reliance on government funding and the strings that come with it, and the constant attacks on the very tenets of the Catholic faith.

This article provides merely a peek into the cobwebbed basements of the aforementioned dissenting organizations. For a broader view, the reader is encouraged to visit the websites of the American Life League, Lepanto Institute, Catholic Culture, and Church Militant. And for a fascinating history of Catholic charity done right, read William J. Stern’s “How Dagger John Saved New York’s Irish,” in the Spring 1997 issue of Manhattan Institute’s *City Journal*.

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