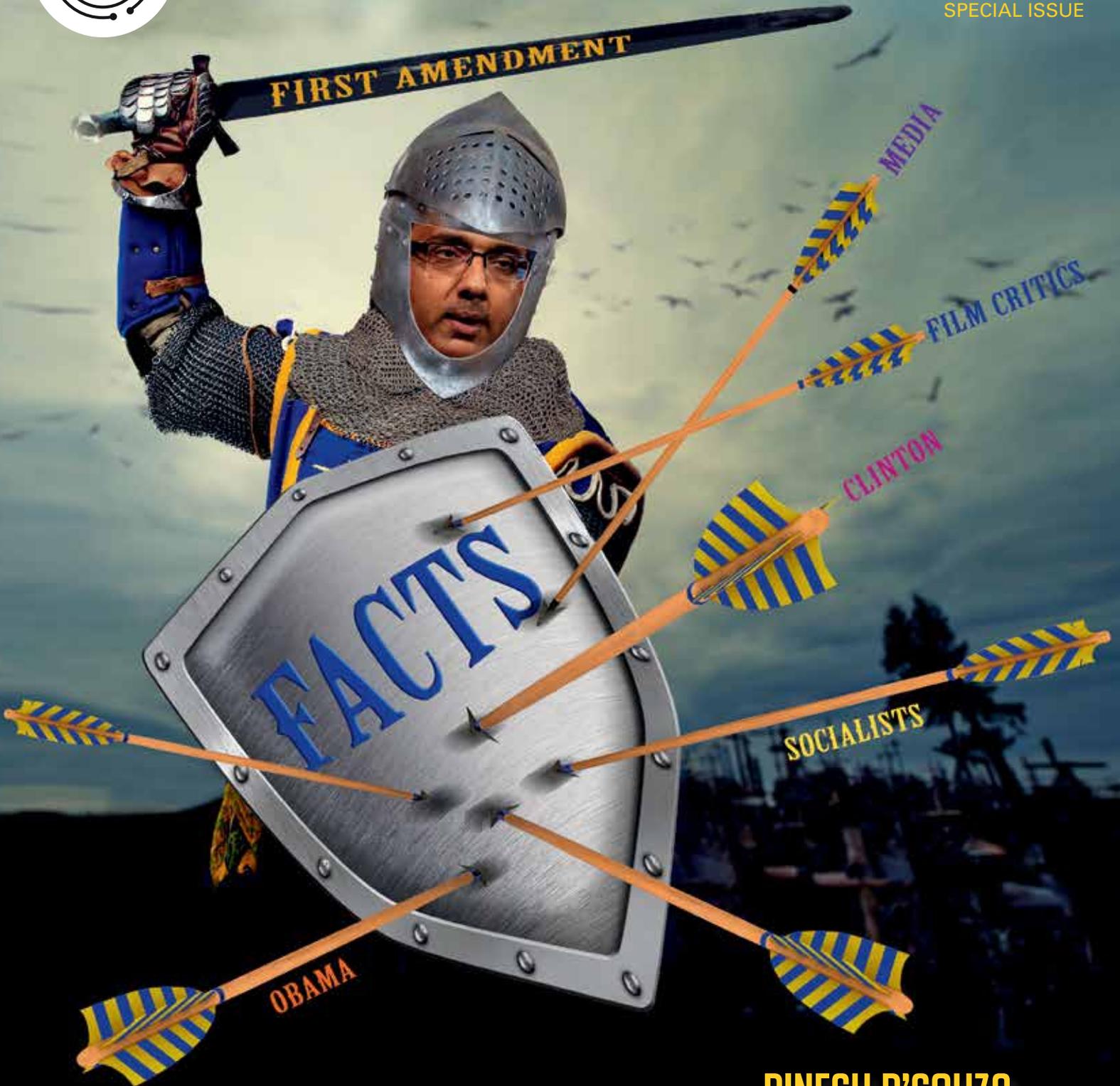




CAPITAL RESEARCH

SPECIAL ISSUE



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THE LEFT'S NEW RADICALS AND THE BIG MONEY BEHIND THEM: HOW NEW DEMOCRAT RADICALISM IS FUELING SCOTUS DRAMA

By Scott Walter

The response to the loss of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg demonstrates once again that the loudest voices who claim to represent Democrats' interests are shouting from the radical wing, further left than the Rev. Al Sharpton, former President Barack Obama, and even Ginsburg herself.

The Left's reaction, led by the Arabella Advisors pop-up group Demand Justice—known for their disturbing antics during the Kavanaugh hearing—was immediately to pledge \$10 million to keep Ginsburg's Supreme Court seat open before the election.

"We're all in to protect RBG's legacy," tweeted the group's executive director Brian Fallon, a onetime press secretary for Clinton's 2016 presidential campaign.

A former Clinton flunkie may not be what springs to mind when one thinks of the radical Left, but it's time to correct that. These radical groups are bolstered by big, left-wing "dark money." During the Kavanaugh hearing, Demand Justice condemned the Supreme Court nominee before his name was even announced. In fact, they openly "worked to galvanize opposition against any Republican nomination for Kennedy's vacated seat."

Kavanaugh's dubious accuser Christine Blasey-Ford was represented by for-profit PR firm SKDKnickerbocker who received \$7 million in 2017 from the Sixteen Thirty Fund, another Arabella group. Protestors who confronted former Sen. Jeff Flake (R-AZ) in an elevator and interrupted hearings during the chaos belonged to the Center for Popular



"We're all in to protect RBG's legacy," tweeted the group's executive director Brian Fallon, a onetime press secretary for Clinton's 2016 presidential campaign.

Democracy, which takes money from New Venture Fund, a sister group of Sixteen Thirty Fund. The four groups Arabella manages, including Sixteen Thirty Fund and the New Venture Fund, brought in more than \$1.6 billion between 2013 and 2017. A new report details how Arabella, since 2006, "has pumped a stunning \$2.4 billion into politics with nary a peep from 'dark money' hawks such as Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) while liberal groups bemoan the threat of conservative political spending to the republic."

These radical protesters who created the chaos over SCOTUS in 2018 were well funded. When Kavanaugh was announced as the nominee, the group began the battle by "attempting to find controversial material in Kavanaugh's judicial record, funding ads calling for Kavanaugh's resignation from teaching summer classes at George Mason

Scott Walter is president of Capital Research Center.



It got ugly, much uglier even than the less extreme attempts of Democrats who had opposed Robert Bork and Justice Clarence Thomas, which were bad enough at the time.

University, and organizing protests against lawmakers after Kavanaugh was confirmed.”

It got ugly, much uglier even than the less extreme attempts of Democrats who had opposed Robert Bork and Justice Clarence Thomas, which were bad enough at the time.

The new radical Democrats are hoping to fund the chaos again as the Democrat Party continues to cede its political strategy to the political philosophy embodied by New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, who appeared at a press conference Sunday with old guard Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-NY) to declare their intent to battle *any* Supreme Court pick by Trump.

“We need to make sure we mobilize on an unprecedented scale to ensure this vacancy is reserved for the next president,” AOC said, while Schumer stood placidly by.

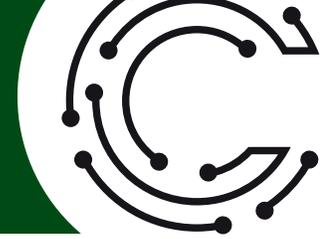
Few seem to remember that Barack Obama soberly demanded the Senate “do its job” and confirm his nominee in 2016. Or that Justice Ginsburg herself was opposed to packing the court (something else the Arabella network has its eye on).

Things are so crazy that Democrats once considered radical have begun to appear moderate— like the Rev. Al Sharpton, who recently criticized the notion of defunding police. Those voices are being drowned out by the fever-pitch, high-frequency din of the new radicals taking over the party.

Should the Democrats want to wrest control back from the radicals in their ranks who would destroy and remake the entire system, they’ll have to go up against a multi-billion-dollar network of funding that is trending as radical as the new class of Democrats.

This article first appeared in Legal Insurrection on September 25, 2020.

Read previous articles from the Commentary series online at <https://capitalresearch.org/category/commentary/>.



CHINA'S GREEN OFFENSIVE: USEFUL IDIOTS AND FELLOW TRAVELERS IN THE ENVIRONMENTAL LOBBY

By Kevin Mooney

Summary: *Several well-funded, environmental advocacy groups lobbied and advised the Obama administration on joining the Paris Climate Agreement without disclosing their close ties to the communist government in Beijing. The agreement would have constrained and restricted U.S. energy use—and the American military and economy—leaving China largely unfettered to pursue its geopolitical ambitions.*

The very day after this year's U.S. elections, President Donald Trump's decision to withdraw from the U.N.'s Paris Climate Agreement will become official. Former Vice President Joe Biden has vowed to rejoin the agreement if elected president. But if Trump has his druthers, the U.S. will remain free and independent of what are effectively international anti-emissions regulations. China is officially part of the agreement, but like all good communists, Beijing government figures only feign support for the agreements that they have signed, while not following through on their stated commitments to the U.N.

Results from Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests show China made shrewd use of environmental advocacy groups that lobbied the Obama State Department to join the Paris Agreement. The agreement would have constrained and restricted U.S. energy use—and the American military and economic power that energy use makes possible. Meanwhile, China would be completely unfettered to pursue its geopolitical ambitions. How did we arrive at this point?

For starters, Team Obama found a way to bypass the U.S. Senate and join the agreement through executive action. This should be an issue in the 2020 campaign, especially since Biden was a key part of the previous administration. The Paris Agreement is a treaty for all intents and purposes. A new FOIA request has been filed to break loose critical



Credit: Casa Rosada. License: <https://bit.ly/3iz5HRS>

A Bloomberg report previewing the latest U.N. conference in Madrid, Spain, last December nicely captures the sly pivot that advances China's geopolitical agenda. Although Bloomberg acknowledges China is the "world's biggest polluter," the Beijing government is credited for its role as "the biggest renewable energy investor."

pieces of information from the State Department that could provide additional insight into how the Obama administration sidestepped the U.S. Constitution along the way toward genuflecting before the U.N. and China.

Here's another question: Shouldn't environmental advocacy groups register as foreign agents if they are lobbying on behalf of foreign agents? The law says they do. Whether or not they are foreign agents, there's no denying that the largest, most politically powerful environmental groups are advancing policies that are advantageous to communist China and harmful to U.S. interests—and human freedom.

Kevin Mooney is an investigative reporter with the Daily Signal who also writes and reports for several national publications including National Review, the Daily Caller, American Spectator and the Washington Examiner.

Opening Exercise

Here's a little exercise for anyone interested in learning more about how the news media and various green activists give cover to the communist government in Beijing.

First, search for a well-funded, environmental advocacy group with international reach that has been critical of China.

The first part—finding well-funded environmental advocacy groups with an international reach—is easy. For example, the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), the Center for Biological Diversity, the World Resources Institute (WRI), and Earthjustice—to name just a few groups—fit the profile.

The second part is more challenging. One way is to search the groups' Twitter feeds for “China” and “environment” and any related environmental terms such as “pollution.”

Give up?

Now search their Facebook posts, press releases, and other public statements. Nothing? That's a little strange isn't it?

By any reasonable metric, China has a horrendous environmental record. The country is beset with soil contamination, industrial pollution, water pollution, and air pollution. For example, the Wikipedia entry on “Pollution in China” details just some of these issues and references articles and reports that were published prior to when the COVID-19 pandemic began to spread from Wuhan, China, late last year.

Anyone from President Trump on down who calls a spade a spade and describes the contagious respiratory infection as the “Chinese Virus” is open to accusations of racism in news reports and White House media events. Suddenly, China is able to escape criticism and scrutiny for its actions that are detrimental to human health and the environment. That's not to say the U.S. media is deliberately carrying the water for Beijing, but its reporting and its fixation on race certainly align with China's public relations agenda. This is part of a continuum.

China was celebrated and feted as a world leader during the most recent meetings of the United Nations Climate Change Conference. A Bloomberg report previewing the latest U.N. conference in Madrid, Spain, last December nicely captures the sly pivot that advances China's geopolitical agenda. Although Bloomberg acknowledges China is the “world's biggest polluter,” the Beijing government is credited for its role as “the biggest renewable energy investor.”

Because China plays ball with the U.N., it also earns the right “to blame America first” for any environmental damage while avoiding any serious scrutiny of its own military operations and industrial practices.

The Natural Resources Defense Council, for instance, takes an active role in U.N. international climate summits and could certainly use an international forum to highlight instances where China's footprint is problematic for clean, air, food, and water.

When last year's climate summit wrapped up in Madrid, the NRDC needed “world leaders” for not doing enough to combat climate change and to curtail pollution. This was an ample opening to take aim at China's large-scale projects



Credit: Malopez 21. License: <https://bit.ly/3cGPVVG>

The major target for activists and media types gathered at U.N. meetings is not China, but the United States. This was the case during the most recent meeting in Madrid, and it will certainly be the case at the meeting next year in Glasgow, Scotland, if Trump wins reelection.



Anyone who describes the contagious respiratory infection as the “Chinese Virus” is open to accusations of racism in news reports and White House media events.

in which massive carbon emissions are in play, land areas are reshaped, and marine habitats put at risk.

For example, China's island building in the South China Sea has laid waste to coral reefs and other sensitive ecological features in the region. The U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission goes into great detail about the damage done to marine environments and the implications for international law. Here's a summary of the commission's report:

From December 2013 to October 2015, China built artificial islands with a total area of close to 3,000 acres on seven coral reefs it occupies in the Spratly Islands in the southern part of the South China Sea. Although dredging, land reclamation, and the building of artificial islands are not unique to China, the scale and speed of China's activities, the biodiversity of the area, and the significance of the Spratly Islands to the ecology of the region make China's actions of particular concern. In addition to damage to the reefs, China's island building activities have negatively impacted fisheries in the immediate area of the reclamation sites, and could negatively impact the health of fisheries in the coastal areas of the South China Sea. The building of these artificial islands will almost certainly lead to increased Chinese fishing in the surrounding waters, which could raise the risk of a clash between Chinese fishing boats and those of other claimant countries. Moreover, China's island building activities may have violated some of its environmental commitments under international law; the ongoing case initiated by the Philippines at the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague regarding China's claims and activities in the South China Sea is considering this possibility."

The NRDC has remained silent.

Tom Shepstone who operates the Natural Gas Now blog out of Honesdale, Pennsylvania, has some insight into why. Shepstone describes a certain relationship between the NRDC and the Beijing regime in a blog entry.

Apparently, the "NRDC collaborates with Chinese government entities that are deeply involved in Chinese efforts to assert sovereignty over the South China Sea in contravention of international law," Shepstone observes. So, there's no speaking out against China's island building. What is the connection? They are mostly financial.

The NRDC is, essentially, a Rockefeller enterprise. It was founded by John Adams, a bat boy for the family team, who continues to be affiliated with the organization as well as its Open Space Institute and Catskill Mountainkeeper spinoffs, the latter being a plaything for his son Ramsay and the former being headed by Rockefeller descendant Kim Elliman. Larry Rockefeller, Jr. is also involved, of course, and the family as a whole funds numerous other fractivist enterprises who collaborate with the NRDC gang. The NRDC does absolutely nothing that is not wholly aligned with the Rockefeller family agenda. They're family, after all.

Adams is a founding director of the NRDC, former federal prosecutor, and Wall Street attorney. He has served as executive director and president for the group.

The China connection is through Steven C. Rockefeller, chairman and CEO of Rose Rock Capital, a family-owned holding company that is devoted to fund management and real estate development in China. The company is primarily focused on development with an outfit called Tianjin Innovative Finance Company Ltd., which is part of the Yujiapu Financial District in Tianjin's special economic zone. That's just a small part of the whole story. What Shepstone is saying is that to find out why a self-described environmental activist is reticent to criticize China's environmental record, "follow the money."

Meanwhile the NRDC maintains a palacious office in Beijing where it celebrates "sustainable workplace practices" and "maintains the highest green building principles."

The Paris Agreement and the Obama State Department

The major target for activists and media types gathered at U.N. meetings is not China, but the United States. In fact, compliant media organs provide China with a platform to criticize President Trump and the U.S. in general for withdrawing from the 2015 Paris Agreement, which requires participating countries to curb their carbon dioxide emissions, ostensibly to combat global warming. This was the case during the most recent meeting in Madrid, and it will certainly be the case at the meeting next year in Glasgow, Scotland, if Trump wins reelection.

The timing here is a bit interesting to say the least. Under the agreement's provisions, a country cannot give notice of withdrawal prior to three years of when the agreement

takes hold in the relevant country, which for the U.S. was on November 4, 2016. The Trump administration gave its formal notice to withdraw on November 4, 2019, but there's an added complication. The withdrawal process takes 12 months, which means that the earliest withdrawal date would be November 4, 2020—the day after the 2020 U.S. presidential election.

China is one of 194 states, plus the European Union, that are party to the agreement as of February 2020. But since China is the world's largest emitter of carbon dioxide emissions, why would it willingly enter into a treaty that would hamper its economic growth and international ambitions?

Bonner Cohen, a senior fellow with the National Center for Public Policy Research, explains (in an interview with this author) that China has no more intention of honoring its commitments to the Paris Treaty than the Soviet Union did of honoring its arm control agreements: "Like the Soviets before them, Chinese communists seek to use international agreements and treaties as a conduit for constraining American military and economic power," Cohen continues, "The Paris Climate Agreement heavily restricts U.S. energy development, which is what Beijing wants. This has both national security and economic implications."

But where U.N. climate change agreements are concerned, it helps to have transnational green activists well positioned inside the U.S. government and to have environmental advocacy groups maintaining a steady chain of communication with those activists whenever they gain a foothold inside the executive branch. FOIA records obtained from the U.S. State Department thanks to litigation filed in 2018 show that this happened under the Obama administration.

The FOIA lawsuit filed by Government Accountability and Oversight, a nonprofit public interest law firm, on behalf of the Institute for Energy Research broke loose a chain of communication between environmental activists with close ties to China, who advised and collaborated with Obama administration officials. The FOIA results are instructive because

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Like the Soviets before them, Chinese communists seek to use international agreements and treaties as a conduit for constraining American military and economic power. —Bonner Cohen

the environmental groups in question denied operating as foreign agents during congressional investigations. But email correspondence produced through FOIA show the World Resources Institute and the Natural Resources Defense Council were advising Obama State Department officials on climate change policy. The Paris Agreement figured prominently in the correspondence between these Obama administration officials and the environmental organizations that are closely tied in with the Chinese government.

Energy policy analysts and attorneys who have reviewed the FOIA records found a concerted effort to avoid describing the Paris Agreement as a treaty so the Obama administration could take unilateral action without obtaining the "advise and consent" of the Senate.

Natural Resources Defense Council. In particular, Jack Schmidt, NRDC's director of international programs, exchanged several messages with Obama State Department officials including Todd Stern, who was a special envoy for climate change at the time of correspondence in 2014 and 2015. Several messages are heavily redacted in the FOIA records, making it difficult to flush out key details. But as noted in an interview with this author, Chris Horner, an attorney for Government Accountability and Oversight, finds there is enough information to show that the NRDC had a hand in formulating the Obama administration's approach to the Paris Agreement.

"Paris is a treaty according to all historical and common-sense considerations," Horner says. "Pretending otherwise satisfies a publicly stated priority of the French hosts of the Paris talks, of the Obama White House and the Obama State Department, and of the NRDC, which emails suggest was the State Department's adviser on this issue."

Under Article II of the U.S. Constitution, the president can enter into treaties, but only with the "advise and consent" of the Senate and only if "two-thirds of senators present concur."

After reviewing the FOIA records, Cohen concluded that the back and forth between the NRDC and the State Department demonstrate that the Obama administration received and accepted legal advice from green activists who were searching for a way to maneuver the U.S. into what was effectively a treaty while bypassing constitutional requirements. He credits President Trump for withdrawing from the Paris Agreement, but also expressed his concern that too many U.S. policymakers are slow to awaken to the dangers posed by green activists who are advancing policies that undermine the U.S. while benefiting China.

“NRDC’s opposition to America’s fossil-fuel development aligns with China’s goal of crippling its primary global rival,” Cohen said. “The Paris Agreement constrains American energy development, which is exactly what the NRDC and Beijing want.”

Horner is not impressed with the legal rationale State Department officials used to redact large portions of the correspondence. The exemption rule cited in the FOIA records protects information about individuals in “personnel and medical files and similar files” when the disclosure of such information would “constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy,” according to the Department of Justice’s description of Exemption 6.

He’s not buying the rationale because the sections of the released emails highlight the NRDC’s role in shaping the Paris Agreement. “They’re not saying it’s government information that we shouldn’t be privy to,” Horner explained. “What they’re actually saying is this collusion is none of our business but it is very much in the public interest.”

Of particular interest to Horner is the Circular 175 memo that Obama State Department used to enter into the Paris Agreement. This type of legal document outlines the legal process department officials use prior to a U.S. administration’s decision to join an international agreement or treaty. It is typically used as an action item by bureaus within the State Department to request authority from department leaders to “negotiate, conclude, amend, extend or terminate an international agreement.”

Horner observes,

Whatever the memo said about the Paris Agreement, it reflected NRDC’s role and input and served as the justification for the Obama claim that an obvious treaty, adopted by all of our supposed models under their procedures for treaties as opposed to agreements, was actually not a treaty for U.S. purposes.



Rhea Suh '92
Former President, Natural Resources Defense Council

Rhea Suh, the current president of the NRDC, previously worked as an assistant secretary for policy, management, and budget in the Department of Interior during the Obama administration.

The NRDC, headquartered in New York, “is one of the nation’s largest environmentalist groups” and “has more than \$180 million in assets to fund its programs,” according to InfluenceWatch.

Rhea Suh, the current president, previously worked as an assistant secretary for policy, management, and budget in the Department of Interior during the Obama administration. Suh also had a hand in developing environmental initiatives for the David and Lucile Packard Foundation and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

The NRDC is overloaded with attorneys and is not shy about saying so. The group’s website boasts:

In 1970, NRDC became America’s first litigation-focused nonprofit. . . . In 2006, we established a specialized team of litigating attorneys to bolster our trial expertise and target opportunities where courtroom pressure can have the biggest impact.

The fact that the NRDC is so lawyered up might help to explain why so much of the correspondence between Schmidt and Stern, and others, is concealed in FOIA documents.

World Resources Institute. The World Resources Institute, which operated as a conduit for Chinese interests, appears to



Credit: World Resources Institute. License: <https://bit.ly/2Gp01FX>

Jennifer Morgan is currently the international executive director for Greenpeace, a position she has held since April 2016. A press release from IER announcing its FOIA lawsuit describes her as a “green group lobbyist” with close ties to China’s National Center for Climate Change Strategy and International Cooperation (NCSC).

have made the mistake of being more overt in its electronic communications with Team Obama. The tight personnel connections between government agencies and green pressure groups lend themselves to a smooth flow of communications.

After leaving the State Department, Stern went on to serve as a distinguished fellow with the WRI for a period of time, which is instructive. He’s no longer on staff, but the incestuous relationship between the WRI and State Department officials from the Obama era is instructive. So is the original FOIA request from the Institute for Energy Research (IER), a nonprofit group that favors free market policies in the energy sector.

The FOIA request dated June 26, 2018, asks for all correspondence between a list of State Department employees and someone named Jennifer Morgan. Morgan is currently the international executive director for Greenpeace, a position she has held since April 2016. Before that, she was the global director of the Climate Program at WRI. A press release from IER announcing its FOIA lawsuit describes her as a “green group lobbyist” with close ties to China’s National Center for Climate Change Strategy and International Cooperation (NCSC):

Public records indicate the Obama State Department leapt to assist WRI’s effort to aid the Chinese government even after being told precisely what the group had been asked to do and for whom. The requested records would shed further light on what that help constituted, and what role Ms. Morgan and WRI played on behalf of China’s government relevant to U.S. policy.

The records IER obtained in response to its FOIA lawsuit highlight a coordinated approach to climate change policy in which Morgan by her own acknowledgment operated at the behest and encouragement of Chinese officials.

An email dated April 15, 2015, from Morgan to Stern, the State Department’s special envoy for climate change, and Clare Sierawski, a chief of staff in the office of special envoy for climate change, demonstrates how China’s makes use of willing accomplices in the environmental movement.

In her message, Morgan describes how she was “approached” by a Chinese government entity to “pursue a dialogue” that would bring U.S. and Chinese officials together:

We think the interest stems from Chinese recognition that this Administration is coming to an end soonish and their desire to open up channels in DC that are additional to the ones that are working well now. As you will see, they are also interested in long-term ideas that one could imagine being discussed with the next Administration (depending of course who it might be).

Morgan even names some of the Chinese officials who could be in on the conversations.

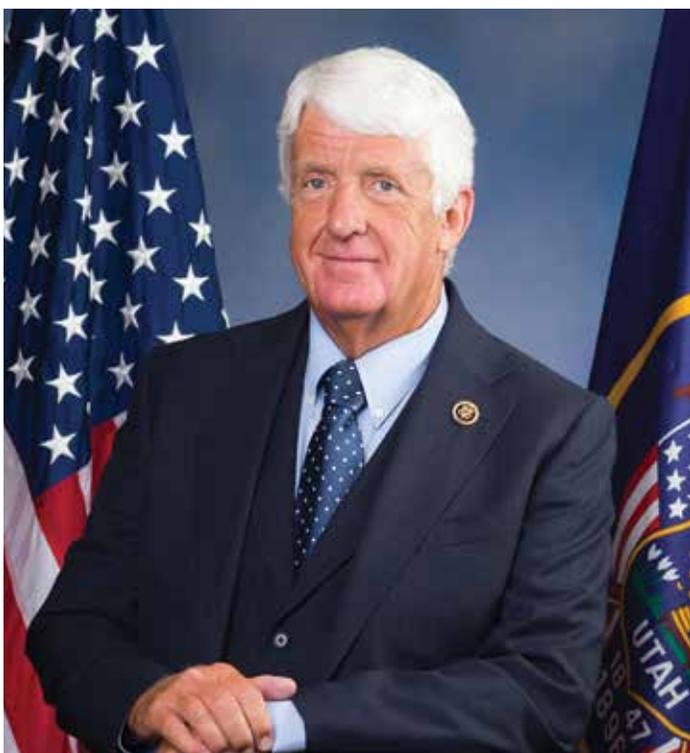
In her April 2015 message, Morgan also tells State Department officials that her Chinese contacts were also looking for an opening to “share ideas around the Paris Agreement” and to recruit think tanks in the U.S. for the purpose of examining what “different approaches or packages could look like for Paris.”

WRI, a nonprofit based in Washington, DC, devoted to curtailing greenhouse gas emissions, has assets of more than \$108 million, according to InfluenceWatch. James Gustave “Gus” Speth, a former law professor and U.N. administrator, is the founder and former president of the group.

China, Foreign Agents, and the Obama Administration

Since the Paris Agreement has become a major issue in the 2020 election, now is a good time to “flush out” and “revisit” some of the “major takeaways” from the FOIA results, says Thomas Pyle, president of the Institute for Energy Research. The fact that Biden served as vice president for the administration that worked in partnership with green activists to advance Chinese interests should be an issue in the campaign, Pyle suggests. He criticizes both WRI and the NRDC for “providing cover” for China to “feign compliance” with U.N. climate agreement obligations while ensuring that the U.S. is constrained and limited in its energy use.

“We still need to get to the bottom of how the Obama-Biden State Department was complicit in these efforts to advance Chinese interests at odds with American interests,” Pyle said. “Going forward, we need to ensure that U.S. policymakers implement energy policies in line with our



Credit: U.S. Congress. License: Public domain.

The Justice Department certainly has plenty to go on thanks to the heavy lifting of Rep. Rob Bishop (R-UT), former chairman of the House Committee on Natural Resources. Bishop, and his House colleagues, sent a series of letters to the NRDC, WRI, the Center for Biological Diversity, and Earthjustice asking the environmental advocacy groups if they were in compliance with the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA).

own interests and not those of our strategic competitors and adversaries. That’s a big part of what this election is about.”

Certainly, the public deserves to know whether the Obama administration followed the proper legal procedure before joining the Paris Agreement. That’s why Government Accountability and Oversight filed a new FOIA lawsuit against the State Department this past November on behalf of Energy Policy Advocates, a nonprofit group based in Washington State that advocates on behalf of transparency in government.

The suit seeks the Obama State Department’s Circular 175 memo that government officials used to advise the Obama White House that it could claim the Paris Agreement was not a treaty. How much of an opportunity the public will have to digest the Obama administration’s legal reasoning is an open question. But the fact that Trump’s withdrawal from the treaty becomes official the day after the presidential election and Biden has vowed to rejoin the international climate change agreement if he wins certainly speak to the need for greater transparency and disclosure by the executive branch.

The Department of Justice is in an ideal position to ask some hard questions of environmental advocacy groups that appear to be operating as foreign agents. But it’s not clear what the federal government’s attorneys are doing to enforce the existing law, which requires individuals and groups to disclose their relationships with foreign governments. The Justice Department certainly has plenty to go on thanks to the heavy lifting of Rep. Rob Bishop (R-UT), former chairman of the House Committee on Natural Resources.

Beginning in June 2018, Bishop, and his House colleagues, sent a series of letters to the NRDC, WRI, the Center for Biological Diversity, and Earthjustice asking the environmental advocacy groups if they were in compliance with the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA), which “requires certain agents of foreign principals who are engaged in political activities or other activities specified under the statute to make periodic public disclosure of their relationship with the foreign principal, as well as activities, receipts and disbursements in support of those activities.”

With the exception of Earthjustice, all the groups have denied operating as foreign agents. Earthjustice registered under FARA in September 2019 after receiving the letters and inquiries from Bishop’s committee.

Bishop’s first letter to the NRDC dated June 5, 2018, and addressed to Suh, the NRDC president, goes into detail about legal actions and advocacy campaigns the group has taken that suggest the NRDC may not be in compliance

with FARA. The letters to the other environmental organizations raise similar questions and use similar language. The letter is co-signed by Bruce Westerman (R-AR), who was chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations at the time.

Chinese officials “work to control environmental information and news stories in an effort to counter the country’s status as the world’s largest polluter,” the House committee letter explains. The “severe pollution” tied to China’s state-owned companies has motivated government and Communist Party officials to “cultivate an image” that counteracts the reality of China’s environmental record.

The Committee is concerned about the NRDC’s role in aiding China’s perception management efforts with respect to pollution control and its international standing on environmental issues in ways that may be detrimental to the United States. The NRDC’s relationship with China has many of the criteria identified by U.S. intelligence agencies and law enforcement as putting an entity at risk of being influenced or coerced by foreign interests. The NRDC’s involvement in China spans two decades and represents a significant investment of time and resources. The NRDC’s ability to work in China is dependent on the goodwill of the Chinese government. The NRDC leadership regularly meets with senior Chinese and Communist Party officials.

The letter goes on to say that “the NRDC appears to practice self-censorship” and “generally refrains from criticizing Chinese officials.” The letter also makes the point that the NRDC has never criticized or even mentioned China’s “illegal and environmentally destructive island reclamation campaign. . . . Of note, the NRDC collaborates with Chinese government entities” that are working to “assert authority over the South China Sea in contravention of international law.”

The correspondence from the House Republicans highlights litigation from the NRDC aimed at constraining U.S. Naval exercises. The NRDC has filed several suits under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) that claim U.S. Navy sonar and anti-submarine drills are harmful to marine life. One case, which the Navy ultimately won, went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

“We are unaware of the NRDC having made similar efforts to curtail naval exercises by Chinese People’s Liberation Army Navy,” Bishop and Westerman noted.

Then there’s the Paris Agreement. The NRDC “sought to shape public opinion” by working to “discredit those skepti-



The congressional investigations helped to shape the FOIA requests from IER, which exposed the relationship among Obama State Department officials, green activists, and Chinese operatives.

cal of China’s commitment to pollution reduction targets,” according to the letter.

Bishop and Westerman conclude the letter by asking for the NRDC to provide documentation showing that is registered under FARA or to explain why it is not. The NRDC settled on providing an explanation. With the Democrats now holding a majority in the House, the NRDC and other green activists can reasonably expect to avoid further congressional scrutiny.

But the work by Bishop, Westerman, and others opens the door for the Department of Justice to start its own probe. Moreover, the congressional investigations helped to shape the FOIA requests from IER, which exposed the relationship among Obama State Department officials, green activists, and Chinese operatives.

The Future of Green Lawfare

What happens next depends partly on what happens in the courtroom.

In September, the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia denied a motion for preliminary injunction from Government Accountability and Oversight “to compel the State Department to release three Obama-era records relating to the Paris climate agreement in time for the voters to assess the propriety of the Obama/Biden backdoor ‘pen and phone’ means of purportedly ratifying Paris.” Horner added:

In response to EPA’s motion for an emergency injunction, this State Department dismissed the importance of allowing the public to learn about these unprecedented machinations before making a choice that both candidates say should be influenced by their respective positions on the Paris treaty.”

But all is not lost. The judge in the case called on the State Department to produce the Obama-era documents by the FOIA’s requested deadline of October 15. Theoretically, that

would give voters sufficient time to digest the information before Election Day.

In addition, the Trump administration's reforms of the NEPA Act could potentially streamline the permitting process for building projects and close off avenues for incessant green litigation. James Coleman, associate professor with the Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law in Dallas, is generally supportive of the reforms the Trump administration has made to NEPA and sees benefits attached to "clarifications" the administration made in its final rule, as stated in an interview with this author.

"There has been such a huge body of cases that has built up around the National Environmental Policy Act and often the cases conflict with one another," he said in an interview.

In fact, the cases are often described as kind of a morass and these reforms cut through this and say what the statutory terms mean and how they should be applied. I think going back to the Supreme Court standard is wise. There have been all sorts of discussions about direct impacts versus indirect impacts versus cumulative impacts and these are terms that do not have meanings apart from NEPA.

In a pure logical sense, this doesn't make sense because if you have to consider direct and indirect impacts what does this really mean other than you just have to consider impacts, right? I do think it is a big improvement here to have a clear statement of what the causation standard [for environmental review] is.

Coleman also made the point that the NEPA reforms have advantages that transcend party politics.

"I think it's important to understand that this isn't just an issue for the Trump administration," he said. "It is now the case with these NEPA reviews, if you do a full review it takes more than five years. So, former Vice President Biden has all these plans of what he wants to do during his first time in office. Well nothing will get built in that first term if this environmental review hasn't already been done. So, there's an important issue here shared across both parties for more clarity in terms of what should be considered for an environmental review. Right now, it takes more than one presidential term to do one of these environmental impact statements."

While the reforms will help to clear up areas of ambiguity that lead to more litigation, Coleman would also like to see Congress enter the fray with legislation that would allow for

NEPA cases to be centralized in the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.

About half of the NEPA challenges are filed in the 9th Circuit, which covers much of the Western states, including California and the 9th Circuit has at times developed a reputation for not following Supreme Court decisions very carefully and being an outlier in its jurisprudence. I think people would feel better about these decisions being a little more balanced if they came out of the D.C. Circuit."

Winter v. NRDC

Winter v. Natural Resources Defense Council is a prominent example of the Ninth Circuit appearing to go a bit sideways in its jurisprudence. In this case, the NRDC lawsuit seemed to suggest that only the U.S. Navy could cause harm to marine life and the marine habitat while omitting any mention of the Chinese navy's environmental impact.

Chief Justice John Roberts authored the majority opinion in the 5-4 decision in which the Court held that the standard for granting a preliminary injunction against the U.S. Navy

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The NRDC lawsuit seemed to suggest that only the U.S. Navy could cause harm to marine life while omitting any mention of the Chinese navy's environmental impact.

is not based on the "possibility" of irreparable harm to marine life, but instead on demonstrating that "irreparable injury is likely" without the injunction. The majority of justices also saw that the public interest in continued U.S. Navy operations superseded speculative, theoretical claims made about potential environmental impacts.

Whether or not the NRDC views itself as a foreign agent or simply driven by green ideology, there is little doubt about which country would have benefited if NRDC's lawsuit against the U.S. Navy had prevailed in the highest court in the land.

Read previous articles from the Green Watch series online at [CapitalResearch.org/category/green-watch/](https://www.CapitalResearch.org/category/green-watch/).

ARCHITECTS OF WOKE:

The 1619 Project's Fake History



STOKELY CARMICHAEL



& RACISM WITHOUT RACISTS

SLAVOJ ŽIŽEK & THE ROMANCE OF REVOLUTIONARY TERROR



CRC's Architects of Woke series takes aim at far-left post-modernist and Marxist thinkers and activists responsible for the spread of identity politics on college campuses and in society at large.

The series is hosted and directed by award-winning filmmaker Rob Montz, whose online documentary work has attracted millions of views and coverage in major outlets, including *The Economist*, *USA Today*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and The Adam Carolla Podcast.

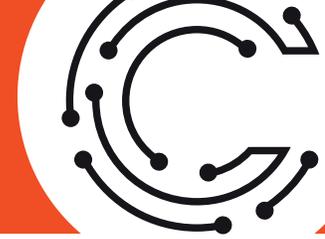
Subjects of the Architects of Woke include the fake history of the 1619 Project, the wildly popular radical socialist podcast *Chapo Trap House*, far-left political activist Howard Zinn, University of California at Berkeley feminist gender theorist Judith Butler, highly influential Marxist-Leninist philosopher Slavoj Žižek.

Watch the entire series at DangerousDocumentaries.com.



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DINESH D'SOUZA MEETS HIS CRITICS

By Scott Walter



On September 17, 2020, CRC president Scott Walter interviewed Dinesh D'Souza on Zoom. The following is a series of selections from the edited transcript of that interview.

SCOTT WALTER: Hello, I'm Scott Walter, the president of Capital Research Center in Washington, DC. I'm very pleased today to be here with my old friend Dinesh D'Souza. Dinesh, of course, is famous for his many books. The very first one was on the *New York Times* bestseller list for weeks and weeks, and almost all the rest have been as well. He is also known for making a number of documentaries, including some of the highest grossing documentaries that have ever been made—certainly the highest grossing documentaries ever made by someone on the conservative side.

Well, my idea for the interview is that you are reasonably skilled as a debater. In fact, our mutual friend Christopher Hitchens once confessed to me that he thought you were the best of the many people who ever debated him on the atheism questions.

So I thought it would be a fun interview to have Dinesh D'Souza meet his critics. So I will be the devil's advocate and throw at you some of the nastiest criticisms that I could find of your last several movies and books.

D'SOUZA: Yes, the Left is actually the other masters of narrative. And what they do is build, what to my mind are sort of bogus narratives, but they do develop a narrative—you have to give them that.

And so to take the small example of George Floyd, they take the case, the incident involving George Floyd, and they don't make what to us would seem the obvious inference. The obvious inference is, hey, if you think that George Floyd was mistreated by this cop, you would want an approach that says how do we get fewer bad cops and more good cops. There's no obvious jump to a separate conclusion to defund the cops, because defund the cops depends on a hidden premise, which is that something about cops including black cops that makes them racist.

And then on top of that you have further ambitious claims that these cops are racist, not because there's racist cop training per se but because they're part of a racist society, a racist education system, a racist culture, and that this chronic racism goes back not just to 1776 but 1619 to invoke the *New York Times's* 1619 Project.

So this is a narrative. It's a storyline. Now it cannot be countered by isolated facts because ultimately a narrative is not a fact. It is an interpretation of a fact. It's a situation of various facts into a coherent story line. And very often we—our side, conservatives, Republicans—do not present counter-narratives. In other words, if American history isn't that way,

Scott Walter is president of Capital Research Center.

what way is it? This is now the driving force of my work: to try to combat false narratives with true narratives. And true narratives require you to tell a story as well as to situate facts within it.

WALTER: Great. Well, let us start then on some of your films and books, but they tend to get reviewed and criticized in the same way, whichever version it may be the book or the movie.

So the first one I'm going to do is the *Death of a Nation*, and here's *Publishers Weekly's* complaint:

[D'Souza's] central comparison of the welfare state to slavery is more hyperbole than analysis, and his over-the-top vilification of everything Democratic—he paints Franklin Roosevelt as a “fascist” who “castigated wealthy Republicans and conservatives in the same type of language that Hitler used against the Jews”—makes much of the reading experience akin to viewing the United States in a fun-house mirror.

True or false?

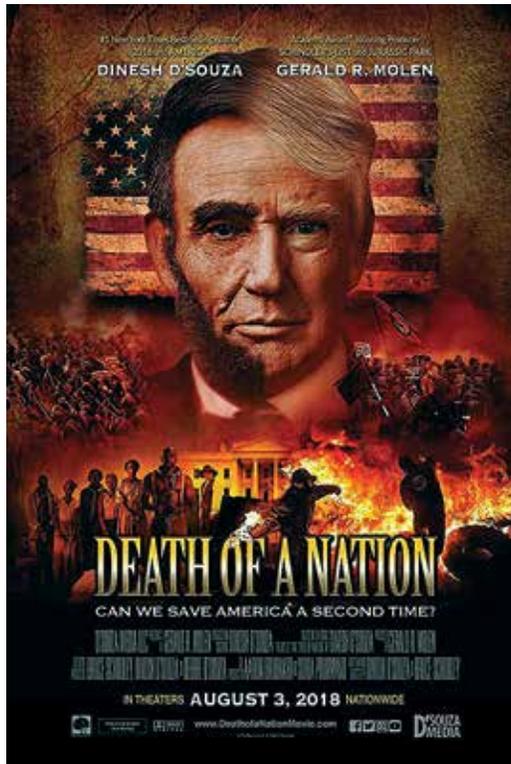
D'SOUZA: One problem—and this I think is going to be a chronic problem with criticism—is that you'll find that in every case the critic doesn't actually state my argument and then proceeded to say what's wrong with it. Rather, they begin with a description of my position that is unrecognizable to me. And so I'm forced at every stage to defend views that I don't really hold.

In my own work, I try really hard if I'm describing other people's views to represent their views in a way that they would accept. For example, I have a recent book on socialism. If I'm talking about the socialist, I'll begin by saying the socialists think this. Then I will say, in thinking about socialists, these are the people that we can call socialist. These are the people that we can call maybe socialist light, and these are the people who are moving us in the direction of socialism, even if they're not themselves socialist.

So in other words, I tried to take the trouble to represent other people's views in a way that they go, “Yeah. That's what I do think.” And I think both in debate and argument it's

obligatory for critics to do this. Otherwise, you're taking a very cheap road, which is that you're smuggling your own criticism into your description of what somebody else is saying.

So let's look, for example, at a handful of the claims about *Death of a Nation* that relate to this. First of all, nowhere do I say that socialism and slavery are identical. Not at all. *Death of a Nation* really is focused on the issue of Fascism, and in the course of discussing Fascism, we also discuss Nazism.



Now Nazism and Fascism are not identical. Fascism by itself is not a race-based ideology. Nazism is. In fact, Nazism is kind of Fascism plus the Nazi doctrine of racial supremacy. That's sort of the distinctive aspect that Hitler brought to Fascism.

Now it turns out I began my research on this by starting off, you may almost say, where Jonah Goldberg left off. Jonah Goldberg explored some fascinating ties between Fascism and Progressivism. Essentially, what Jonah argued—picking up, by the way, from Hayek—is that you had three sort of sister ideologies—Progressivism, Fascism, and Communism—that all developed around the same time in opposition to what can be called sort of classical liberalism or liberal capitalism, and all these three ideologies—although distinct in important ways—were cousins. Nobody would

say Progressivism equals communism or even communism equals Fascism. They were all statist. They all involve the moving society away from free markets and toward the centralized state. And this was a powerful trajectory in the 20th century, and all the people who were in these movements came out of the same side of the aisle.

So to take, for example, Fascism. Fascism developed semi-independently in about seven countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, and England. So there were founders of Fascism in all those countries. Now if you look at them, without exception every single one of the founders of Fascism, in all the countries, are men of the far Left. In England, Mosley was literally thrown out of the Labour Party because he was too left-wing, and then he became a fascist. And we find in France, the leading fascists, some of them, went back to the to the turn of the 19th century. They were part of the Socialist movement in the late 19th century. In Italy, Mussolini and his buddies came out of the Marxist move-

ment. They were a faction of the Marxist movement, but they were part of that movement and later when Mussolini established an independent fascist entity. His chief advisor was the co-founder of the Italian Communist Party. So the links between Progressivism, communism, and Fascism are there now.

Jonah Goldberg stopped short of going to Nazism. I think he felt that with the Holocaust Nazism is in a special category. Of course, the Holocaust is in a special category, but I was talking about early Nazism. Interestingly, early Nazism was very appealing to many people in America. It had a lot of American recruits. Not only did Progressivism influence Nazism, but Nazism influenced Progressivism. This fact is in both my books and my movies.

I just take two notable examples. The Nazi sterilization laws were essentially lifted verbatim from progressive sterilization laws promoted by Margaret Sanger and friends. Now this is not even something that was done secretly. The progressives in America knew about this. They were super excited that the Nazis had done this. Sanger gave speeches talking about how happy she was that the Nazis were, from her point of view, ahead of America in implementing these birth control schemes. So there is direct influence. This is not resemblance; it's actual borrowing.

Second, historians have actually only recently kind of developed this idea. But there's tremendous documentation for it. The Nazis who wrote the Nuremberg Laws, which made Jews into second-class citizens, had meetings in which they were holding in their hands the Democratic laws of the Jim Crow South. So it's important to realize that every segregation law in the South was passed by a Democratic legislature and signed by a Democratic governor. There are no exceptions to this rule.

The Nazis knew all this, and they had these laws in their hands. And in trying to think about formulating what they call the world's first racist state, one of the Nazis literally said we don't have to form the world's first race state because the Democratic Party in America has already done this for us. We just need to take their model and use it. And so they looked, for example, to the one drop rule that the Democrats were using in the South, basically saying that if

you had any traceable black ancestry that made you black. And the Nazis actually decided to take a softer line on this than the Democrats. They adopted what came be called the three-fourths rule, which is that you need 75 percent of Jewish ancestry in order to be a Jew, but if you are 1/10 Jewish or 1/125th Jewish, you wouldn't count because you didn't have enough.

So they as one Nazi put it, "The one drop rule—it is a little too harsh." The Nazis felt that they couldn't go as far as the Democrats.

These facts are anchored in the record. They have been written about by mainstream scholars, and I cite them. You'll notice that none of these reviews actually consider any of this. They don't consider the fact that FDR, although not a fan of Hitler, as I make very clear, was in fact a big fan of Mussolini. FDR spoke very favorably about Mussolini. He sent members of his brain trust to fascist Rome to study Mussolini's policies, which he saw as more progressive than the New Deal. FDR wasn't alone, by the way. The *New Republic* and many other intellectual organs of the progressive Left were very enthusiastic about Mussolini. It was a mutual admiration society. Mussolini reviewed FDR's book in an Italian magazine, and he basically goes, this guy's a fascist just like us. So these ties are in the record.

Now, by the way, the Left has worked really hard. Much of what we call history is progressive history. They've written the textbooks. They control the History Channel. They control Wikipedia. So the stuff I'm saying can't be found in those places for the simple reason that the progressives have made sure that it's been left out. It's not in the textbooks. But yet I'm citing mainstream sources. I'm providing all the documentation. There's not a single historian of any competence who has challenged me in any of these facts. What they do is they'll rely on a caricature of what I said as if FDR's attack on bankers and its resemblance to Hitler's attack on Jewish capitalist. There is a sort of surface resemblance there, but that's not the heart of my case. The heart of my case is that FDR had actual ties with the actual fascists, and the actual fascists not only in Italy but in Germany were fans of FDR. FDR was championed by the early Nazi newspapers. And I have all the quotations in the book. All of this stuff is what the Left would have to deal with in



One Nazi said, we don't have to form the world's first race state because the Democratic Party in America has already done this for us.

a genuine refutation. And that's my problem: There are no genuine refutations because what you get are mischaracterizations that then forced me to defend views that I don't really hold and have never really publicly argued.

WALTER: Well since the Capital Research Center spends so much time studying bad funding by the Left, I should just add the footnote that progressive foundations like Carnegie Rockefeller were funding lots of eugenics and even just raw racist research. In fact, Carnegie was funding in Germany all the way through to 1939 and has never apologized for its role in that.

D'SOUZA: Now what you're pointing to is a very important phenomena, which is that Social Darwinism and eugenics were part of Progressivism. The progressives champion these causes. Now this crucial fact was carefully hidden by the historian Richard Hofstadter in his book on Social Darwinism [*Social Darwinism in American Thought*] published much later. Hofstadter pretended like Social Darwinism meant nothing more than applying the principles of free market economics to the marketplace under the theory that the fittest companies would survive, and he acted like that was the heart of Social Darwinism.

But actually that was not the heart of Social Darwinism. There might have been one or two scholars—perhaps Herbert Spencer—who argued in that mode, but most capitalists never read Darwin. They never bothered to make Darwinian arguments for their beliefs. Their belief was that markets work, markets produce prosperity. They were anchored far more in Adam Smith than in Darwin.

The real thrust of Social Darwinism was on the social side. Which is in Margaret Sanger's words to get rid of "human weeds" to prevent horrible people and useless people from being born. This was the heart of the progressive cause, and Hofstadter's job—which I think he performed very self-consciously; there's no other way to look at it—was ultimately to take all of that and put it under the rug and reinvent Social Darwinism at a time when it was losing popularity in such a way that it could be pinned on the Right.

And the same thing has happened to Fascism more generally and Nazism. If you go to the Nazi 20-point platform. You know there it is, and you find it on Google and read it. It doesn't sound like something that's coming from the Right at all. Donald Trump would not be on board with any of the planks. Now true there's anti-Jewish stuff that you won't hear explicitly on the Left today. But if you remove that and look

for the actual substantive social policy content of the Nazi 25-point platform—essentially cross out the word Jews—and read it without that it sounds like something drafted by Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren. It's a leftist agenda.

That's what I was trying to say that the Nazis were on the left. They saw themselves on the left. Their critics saw them on the left. And the notion that Nazism is a right-wing phenomenon is a progressive invention post-World War II.

WALTER: Now to stick to that same *Publishers Weekly* review of *Death of a Nation*, for a moment, they do actually have some praise for you, and it's about a different set of connections that you make in the book. They say that

you're cogent on several things, including the connection between today's white nationalists like Richard Spencer, and left-wing identity politics. I confess that was my favorite part of the book and the movie. Can you explain a little bit about those connections?

D'SOUZA: Remember that Richard Spencer is the poster boy of white supremacy. He has been featured that way in the media. He was trotted out as the poster boy of Charlottesville, the supposed alt-right rally in Charlottesville.

He is the basis, in fact the most concrete face, of the idea that white supremacists support Trump.

Normally, you'll notice that, when the Left says this, they provide no evidence. They have never done any kind of survey of skinheads or members of the Ku Klux Klan. They don't have any voting data. None of it. Their idea of making their case is essentially to show a picture of some guy, some Klansmen, wearing a Trump hat, and then they trot out Richard Spencer, who seemed to be a Trumpster in 2016. But if you begin to read Richard Spencer's views, you begin to realize right away that he's no right-winger.

He's actually a left-winger of the old sort—of the old Democratic sort—and he's a statist. He wants a powerful centralized government. He wants nationalized health care. He believes in sort of state control of society for the benefit of whites. So you may say he's a statist, and he practices identity politics. If he had a hashtag, it would be #WhiteLivesMatter.

Now the Democrats don't believe that white lives matter. They emphasize today that black lives matter, but notice that in both cases, there is a racialization of politics. This is not just a defensive of life or a defense of human dignity. It's an attempt to capitalize on race for political gain, and the important thing historically is that the Democrats invented this game. It came really out of the Civil War: When slavery

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ended, the Democrats used white nationalism as the glue in order to establish what came to be called the Solid South. It became a Solid South. Remember the South wasn't solid before the Civil War. In fact, the very doctrine of states' rights that the South invoked ensured a tremendous heterogeneity in the South because states' rights means everyone goes their own way.

So a guy from Arkansas didn't identify with the guy from Missouri. A guy from Florida didn't identify with the guy from Texas—not at all. After the war, the Democrats realized we don't have slavery, but we do have racism. Why don't we cultivate that? Why don't we build on that?

So I saw that Richard Spencer is in this tradition. The Democrats have made some pivots, but they had made pivots within the racialized paradigm. They've essentially gone from white lives matter to black lives matter. But in every other respect, Richard Spencer is on the left. His heroes are progressives. He doesn't like Reagan. He doesn't like the Founding. He doesn't believe that there are inherent human rights.

So when I exposed in the movie, there were a lot of people even on the conservative side who were little baffled because they sort of accept the idea that there are left-wing extremists and there are right-wing extremists. They kind of had felt like, well, we're sort of saddled with Richard Spencer. He's kind of on the extreme of our side, not realizing that he's really not, just as Mussolini is not and Hitler is not. So I was vindicated really quite startlingly just a few weeks ago when Richard Spencer basically came on and said not only am I endorsing Biden but I'm voting the straight Democratic ticket.

So here's a guy who was briefly for Trump. I think on the immigration issue alone. Even there the important differences were Trump. I mean Trump is in favor of legal immigrants and doesn't want illegals. Richard Spencer doesn't want either. In fact, he told me in the interview I did with him in the movie, "Well, Dinesh, I'm going to figure out a way to send you home." So I was very happy to have sort of outed Spencer a couple of years ago, and now Spencer himself has come out very clearly as being a Biden guy and essentially a committed Democrat.

WALTER: Well, let's go all the way back to that same mid-80s era. After you left the White House, you came to AEI with Chris DeMuth, a great man. And you also became the editor-in-chief of *Crisis Magazine*, which is still published. And one of your early things you did involved that mutual

friend of ours Christopher Hitchens. You did an interview with him, and you outed him in a way that may surprise some people. Can you tell us just a little bit about that?

D'SOUZA: This was an interview I published in *Crisis* with Hitchens about the issue of abortion or the so-called pro-life issue, and it was an article in which Hitchens sort of came out on the pro-life side. This had emerged in a somewhat casual conversation I had with Hitchens where he had confessed to having moral anxieties about abortion. I had asked him at the time to reconcile those with his atheist position because in general one would expect that an atheist wouldn't care that much about the abortion issue or would be by and large on the pro-choice side.

And Hitchens responded in a very interesting way. He said that precisely because he was an atheist and because this life was as far as he was concerned the only life, he thought it made it a special crime, a special horror that that life would be terminated at the outset. In other words, if you think of this life as one second in a large expanse of eternity and then if you take an unborn child and let's say terminate its life, but it goes let's say from a Christian point of view straight to heaven, then arguably the child has a destiny, an eternal

destiny that redeems the horror of abortion in the present. But for Hitchens, he said there is no such redemption. There's only this life. This is the one chance that you get. And I thought, "Wow, I've never quite heard anyone argue from this position."

So I convinced him to do a sort of dialog about it. And in the dialog, I expected him to wimp out on the issue of laws against abortion. In other words, to express a moral concern for the unborn, but then to say well nevertheless I don't want to impose my views on others, or I don't support legislation that would actually make people abide by all this. But he didn't. He actually said, "No, I agree that at the end of the day we need to have laws that would regulate abortion." He didn't come

out for an outright ban, but he came out for regulation. And he also came out for regulation at the federal level.

In other words, the idea is that if this is a life, it makes no sense—just as it made no sense under popular sovereignty for the Democrats in the 1850s to talk about "Let each community decide for itself if it wants slavery." The reason that it made no sense, as Lincoln pointed out, is because you cannot exercise choice to deny choice. You cannot invoke the right of choice to suppress the choices of others. And so

As Lincoln pointed out, you cannot exercise choice to deny choice. You cannot invoke the right of choice to suppress the choices of others

similarly here, what Hitchens was saying is that you can't make it a decentralized decision. You need to have a federal law that starts with the premise that life deserves protection, constitutional protection and federal protection.

So all of this was in the *Crisis* article, and it landed as a bit of a bombshell for the Left because they weren't expecting this. They're used to a high degree of ideological conformity on this issue because it is such an important issue for them. I was very proud of publishing that article. I think it speaks well to Hitchens that he was brave enough to do it. And by the way, he never backed away from it, even though many people pressed him to disavow the article. He never did later. So Hitchens was a man that even from some distance we would have to admire and for whom I always had genuine affection

WALTER: Yes, and I can't help noticing that this would be a case where it's worth comparing him to Richard Spencer, who is quite fond of abortion for understandable reasons given his gruesome racial ideology.

Well, one last question on good old Hitchens. You and he definitely had some disagreeing moments in debates over the general question of atheism and theism. What do you think are one or two of his best arguments against you and one or two of your favorite rejoinders to him?

D'SOUZA: Hitchens was a very tricky guy to debate because you couldn't debate him in the normal way.

I remember watching a debate. I think it was between Hitchens and William Lane Craig, the very capable Christian apologist. Craig would outline the five reasons for this and the four reasons for that, and Hitchens would not address those but would rely on slingshots and jibes and guffaws, and he did it all in the Oxford style, you know: "Mr. President, Mr. Chairman, may I interject" and so on.

I realized that he was having such a jovial time of it that if I were in the audience, if I were a student watching these two men and I were to ask the question, not who has the better argument, but which guy would I like to meet after this debate for a drink or for dinner? The choice would go overwhelmingly to Hitchens, and I realized from that, that debate is ultimately not merely an intellectual exchange

because ultimately when someone is watching—a Christian debate an atheist—they're asking themselves, would I rather be a Christian or an atheist? Would I rather be more like Dinesh or would I rather be more like Hitchens?

So Hitchens's arguments were in that sort of bohemian mode. This is the type of thing. He would say, "Well, Dinesh, I just got back from North Korea. I've met God. His name is Kim Jong-il. He's a lot like your God. But to be honest, I would much rather live under Kim Jong-il than I would under your God because at some point Kim Jong-il will die and the tyranny will come to an end. But Dinesh, in your scheme, it lasts forever. Your God is a far worse tyrant than Kim Jong-il."

Now this is not intended as an argument. But it's kind of whimsical. It's witty. It tells the audience that Hitchens is a man about town. He's cosmopolitan. He just got back from North Korea. He's speaking from experience. He's expressing this kind of bold revolt against anyone tyrannizing over him in any way. This is a kind of radical expression of freedom.

And so I always I had to think to myself: Now how do you refute that? What do you say in response to that? And so with Hitchens, it was always a matter—not merely meeting the argument but ultimately speaking a language that was itself, you may say, Hitchensian, that engaged him at his own level and in his own terms, and flustered him on his own terms. And he would definitely be flustered that way.

So I'll give you what I think is one of my best arguments, where I literally could see him look very disconcerted. Later to me, he goes, "I'm gonna have to go back to the drawing board on that one." He was invoking the Freudian argument that religion is wishful thinking. This comes from Freud's book on religion *The Future of an Illusion*. The idea here is very simple that Christians cannot bear the actual sufferings of life. They get diabetes. They get old. They get sick, and because they cannot cope with suffering in the world, they manufacture in their mind another world called heaven, which liberates them from having to face the world as it is.

So this you can see is a very Hitchensian. It's sort of Hitchens striking the pose of bravery. He's morally tough and facing the world as it is. We Christians are sort of living in the sort of la-la land. And he loved this kind of argument.



We're both making a leap of faith, asserting a belief in something for which neither of us can provide any definitive empirical evidence.

My rebuttal to it was: “Well, Hitchens, there appears to be a grain of truth in what you say. And if it were true the Christians wanted to live in a sort of better world than the one we actually inhabit, I can totally see why Christianity and other religions too fabricate the idea of heaven because heaven is much better than anything that we face in this life. Heaven is no suffering, no hardship, no pain. But you have to admit that Christianity like Judaism and Islam also has another concept, which is much harder to square with this Freudian analysis. And that is the idea of hell. Now hell is a lot worse than diabetes. It’s a lot worse than suffering. It’s a lot worse than the ordinary pains of life. And in fact, it’s eternal. So why would a group of people looking to fabricate this kind of happy? Is to avoid facing the hardships of life come up with something that is actually far worse than anything that life has to offer. Why would they do that?”

And Hitchens could not answer. I think he had never thought of it. It hit him straight between the eyes, and he realized I’ve got to come up with a theory that doesn’t merely account for heaven but also accounts for hell, and so we had a lot of this going on back and forth. Sometimes he would say things, and I would go “Wow, I have to think of a better way to come back on that one.”

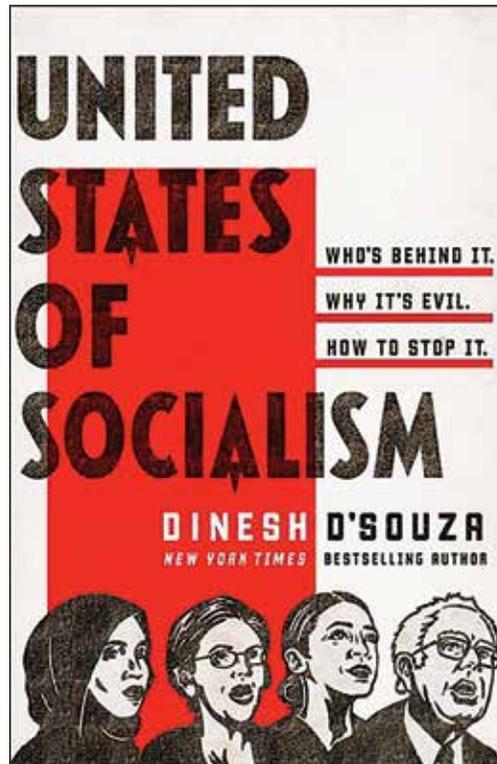
I think one of my best points against Hitchens had to do life after death. Hitchens said in effect, “You know, Dinesh is an intelligent man. And normally he lives his life by rational calculations. If somebody were to tell Dinesh, you know, your wife is cheating on you. Dinesh would say well what’s the evidence? So he lives his life by the normal rules of empirical inquiry he goes, but when it comes to Christianity, Dinesh throws his brains out the window and so Dinesh will say things like I believe in life after death. And Hitchens goes that’s ridiculous. Has Dinesh been to the other side of the curtain? Has he seen what comes after death? Does he have one ounce of empirical evidence that there’s life after death. Of course not. So he’s talking complete nonsense. Ultimately, what he’s saying is a statement of pure faith based upon no evidence whatsoever.”

And in my rebuttal, I said to Hitchens, “Well, you have explained my belief in life after death as purely the product of faith. So let me ask you do you believe there’s life after death?”

He goes, “No.”

I said, “Oh, well, have you been to the other side of the curtain? Have you seen what comes after that?”

“No.”



“In other words, what information do you have that I don’t about what comes after. None. So the real difference between you and me is not that you know and I don’t know, that you’re using evidence and I’m not. The truth of it is, we’re both making a leap of faith. We both are asserting a belief in something for which neither of us can provide any definitive empirical evidence. The real difference between you and me is not that you know and I don’t or that I know and you don’t. It is that I will openly and honestly admit that my position is based on faith. Whereas you poor deluded atheists somehow think that your position is based on evidence, even though in fact you have none.”

So this is just to give a feeling of what those debates sounded like we did about ten of them. Frankly, I don’t think we did a single one in a church.

We did one in the museum of St. Louis. We did one at the University of Colorado in Boulder. We did several on campuses, and so they were debates in front of a secular audience and that made them particularly engaging and challenging and fun.

WALTER: Well, I want to thank you again for giving us all this time and for your support for Capital Research’s own work, since you have a lot of fans who will be reading or listening to these words. Is there anything that you have coming up that you think your admirers will especially enjoy?

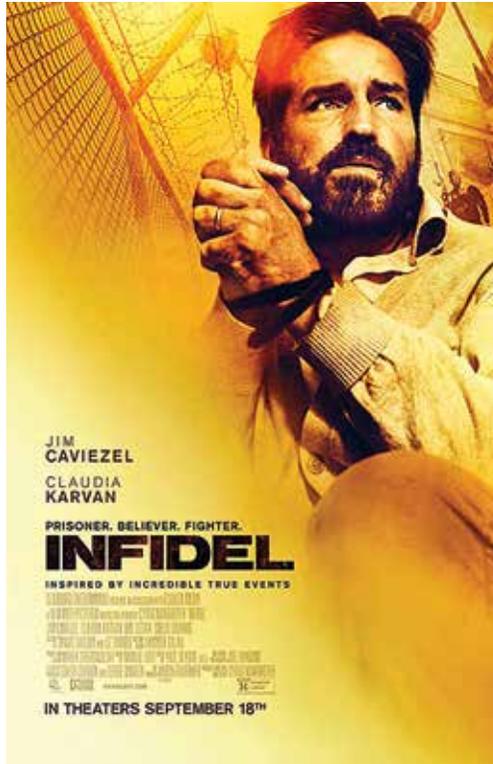
D’SOUZA: I’d like to mention a couple of things. My current work is focused on socialism, the socialist Left. Why? Because I think that a lot of the tactics that we’re seeing the rise, for example, of paramilitary gangs on the street operating with the apparent toleration, if not encouragement, of the Democratic Party. The emergence of the deep state by which I mean the police agencies of government—the FBI,

the IRS, the CIA, even the DOJ—using their power against political dissidents and political opponents. Now all of this is tactics. All of this is a means. But a means to what end?

Well, I think it means moving America more in the socialist direction, and I don't just mean economically. Socialism is essentially not only economic control but control over your life, control ultimately over what you think and what you say, and how you say it and where you say it, and how you believe and in how you practice your faith.

And the Left—we have seen very clearly even in this in this era of coronavirus—do want and like to control all those things. So socialism is in a way their endgame. They like it because in the end it empowers people like them, it puts them in the saddle, and it creates two classes of citizens. I think from their point of view a sort of Democratic majority made up of racialized groups.

In other words, the new socialism is identity socialism, a kind of marriage of classic socialism and identity politics. It appeals to not just a class grievance, but racial grievance, gender grievance, transgender grievance, the line between legals and illegals, and so on. So that's my book *United States of Socialism*, and the accompanying movie is called



Trump Card, which will be released October 9 on video on demand.

Then, I'm also, along with my wife Debbie, the executive producer of a feature film. It's called *Infidel*. It's a film about radical Islam. It's a thriller and a story, and it reflects my sense that documentaries are good, and they tell an important story. But documentaries are, you may call it, just a part of what Hollywood does.

So what I'm trying to do with my career is to become a lot more entrepreneurial, is to now create ways for our side to create educational institutions, media institutions, entertainment institutions that didn't exist before. And it's really fun, and it can have a very positive impact in the long term because in the long term we can't concede all the large megaphones about culture to the Left. Even if we win an election or two

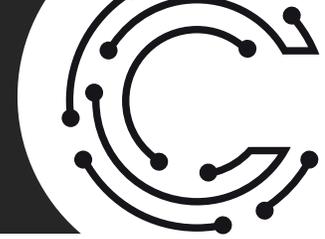
at the end of the day, they will win in the end if we aren't able to compete in getting our message out to enough people.

WALTER: Well, that's the perfect note to end on so thank you so much, Dinesh.

D'SOUZA: Scott. It was a pleasure good talking to you.

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DECEPTION & MISDIRECTION



IMPEACH 45 INC.: THE NARRATIVE, A FUNDRAISING JUGGERNAUT, AND CONGRESSIONAL ABUSE OF POWER

By Fred Lucas

Summary: *“Impeach 45” became a regular chant and hashtag for the Left in its efforts to oust the 45th president from office before the next election. This predated President Donald Trump’s controversial phone call with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, which became the pretext for his impeachment. It was also well before the Mueller report, which cleared Trump and his campaign of conspiring with the Russian government to meddle in the 2016 election. MoveOn, Free Speech for People, RootsAction, and other left-wing nonprofits played essential roles in eventually pushing the House of Representatives to impeach the president, despite the certainty that the Senate would refuse to convict.*

In November 2017, Rep. Maxine Waters (D-CA) finally had a grand stage to essentially name the movement she and others on the far Left had advocated for since before Donald Trump was sworn in as president. She was speaking to more than 1,000 people at *Glamour* magazine’s Women of the Year Awards at Brooklyn’s King Theater:

You recognize when a leader is dangerous, even if that leader is the president of the United States of America. . . . For those who say to me, “You are asking for something too soon and too early, be careful, don’t jeopardize yourself, don’t say what you’re saying right now,” I will continue to say, “Impeach him! Impeach him! Impeach him!”

The crowd erupted with “wild applause and a standing ovation.”

“Impeach 45,” she yelled.

“Impeach 45,” the audience responded.

“I didn’t hear you. Impeach 45.”

And the crowd engaged in an “Impeach 45” chant.

It would become a regular chant and hashtag for the Left going forward to try to oust the 45th president from office before the next election.



Credit: House of Representatives photographic studio. License: Public domain.

In November 2017, Rep. Maxine Waters (D-CA) finally had a grand stage to essentially name the movement she and others on the far Left had advocated for since before Donald Trump was sworn in as president.

members of the Congressional Progressive Caucus. The dam broke—or a “crescendo” emerged as one establishment Democrat congressman later called it—of demands from the organized Left, which whipped enough voters into calling for an impeachment inquiry. By July 2019, before the Ukraine call was in the news, a majority of House Democrats voiced support for an impeachment inquiry. This followed a blitz by left-wing billionaire Tom Steyer, nonprofits such as MoveOn, Free Speech for People, and other organizations.

Fred Lucas is the author of Abuse of Power: Inside the Three-Year Campaign to Impeach Donald Trump (Bombardier Books, 2020). He is a journalist who reports for the Daily Signal, FoxNews.com, Newsmax, and other outlets.

All of this was well before Trump’s phone call with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. It was also well before the report by Special Counsel Robert Mueller that cleared Trump and his campaign of conspiring with the Russian government to meddle in the 2016 election.

Waters had been and would continue to be the loudest cheerleader for what was essentially Impeach 45 Inc., as described in my book *Abuse of Power: Inside the Three-Year Campaign to Impeach Donald Trump*.

Eventually, it wasn’t just Waters and

An Impeach 45 Inc. infrastructure had developed across the country, packed with people who could not accept the results of the 2016 election and were unwilling to wait for the next election. The improbable matter Democrat leaders wanted to dodge eventually became a fundraising rallying cry for progressive nonprofits, and advocacy groups that made impeaching Trump a litmus test for the Left.

The Democratic Party owed its House majority to the members who ran as centrists in 2018 in red and purple districts, promising that impeachment was not their agenda. In the end, these professed centrists were more frightened of a primary challenge from their left than having to explain away why they stuck with their party on a seemingly inconsequential vote.

When the Russia conspiracy theory was discredited and the push to impeach Trump for tweets, owning businesses, and firing executive branch employees (which a president is authorized to do) all sputtered out, Democrats turned to the Ukraine call.

ImpeachTrumpNow.org

It began after the election. In December 2016, a group of Democratic senators—led by Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts—drafted rather unserious legislation insisting Trump divest his business assets, arguing that failure to do so would be a high crime and misdemeanor. It was a legal nonstarter, but it was a statement.

The first real push in the nonprofit sector emerged when two left-wing groups, which at least had the courtesy to wait for Inauguration Day, began demanding impeachment. Free Speech for People, which contrary to its name supports an amendment to the Constitution limiting campaign contributions, and RootsAction, a group that tries to mobilize voters on issues of climate change and civil rights, established ImpeachDonaldTrumpNow.org.

The site went live with a petition the moment Trump took the oath of office. On Inauguration Day, Ron Fein, legal director at Free Speech for People, told the *Washington Post*:

If we were to wait for all the ill effects that could come from this, too much damage to our democracy would occur. . . . If nothing else, it's important for Americans to trust that the president is doing what he thinks is the right thing . . . not that it would help jump-start a stalled casino project in another country.



It was always about Trump, and the narrative that he was an existential threat to, well, virtually everything.

The two organizations developed a strategy that made it sound easy enough. Just get a resolution calling for the House Judiciary Committee to launch an impeachment.

Over time, it named 10 grounds for impeachment. These included emoluments (or profiting from public office), “giving aid and comfort to white supremacists and neo-Nazis,” abusing pardon power, and “threatening nuclear war against foreign nations.” The last seemed to take the side of North Korea over Trump. No matter. By the time the 2019 impeachment arrived, the ImpeachTrumpNow.org proposed articles of impeachment had been either discredited or forgotten about. But the seeds were planted.

Of course, substance of charges or a perceived injustice was never the point of what became Impeach 45 Inc. It was always about Trump, and the narrative that he was an existential threat to, well, virtually everything.

Fein was correct about one thing on Inauguration Day, “Getting [an impeachment resolution] introduced is not going to be a problem.”

Weeks into Trump’s presidency, the ImpeachDonaldTrumpNow.org petition had more than 500,000 online signatures.

In an op-ed for *Time* titled, “Legal Scholars: Why Congress Should Impeach Donald Trump,” James Nelson, a former Montana Supreme Court justice and member of the legal advisory committee for Free Speech for People, along with the organization’s president, John Bonifaz, wrote Trump must be ousted over his conflicts of interest:

In the case of Trump’s ownership in the Trump Organization, this could be achieved only by a complete liquidation of the assets, with the proceeds to be invested by an independent Trustee, without Trump’s involvement or knowledge. . . .

To address this unprecedented corruption of the Oval Office and this threat to our Constitution and our democracy, we believe Congress must move forward now with an impeachment investigation of President Trump.



Credit: Gage Skidmore. License: <https://bit.ly/2Gv5KB2>.



Credit: 2C2K Photography. License: <https://bit.ly/2SuGDYz>.

It's not that Nancy Pelosi had a change of heart. It's that political circumstances had changed. Instead of continuing to insist on an impeachment that was "compelling and overwhelming and bipartisan," she settled for un compelling, underwhelming, and extremely partisan.

The charge in the Al Green-Brad Sherman resolution (H.Res. 646) was not obstruction of justice, but rather "associating the majesty and dignity of the presidency with causes rooted in white supremacy, bigotry, racism, anti-Semitism, white nationalism, or neo-Nazism."

"We've Got to Do Something About Him"

Impeaching Trump for something, anything, was a laser focus for the Left even before his inauguration on January 20, 2017, though Waters was one of only a few lawmakers who said that quiet part out loud from the get go.

Shortly after the inauguration and before becoming the inspirational leader of the Impeach 45 movement, Waters didn't seem to know the difference between Crimea and Korea. When Ukraine became the only tangible rationale for eventually impeaching Trump, that presumably changed. In a television interview on Cheddar shortly after the 2017 inauguration, she said:

Well, I hope he's not there for four years. I hope that this man and who he is, what he's done, the way that he's defined himself, the way that he's acting, I am hoping that we're able to reveal all of this. And my greatest desire is to lead him right into impeachment.

Waters is a veteran lawmaker who managed to have one foot in the establishment and one foot in the far Left of the House Democratic caucus. She even has a bit of a political machine in Los Angeles. She explained during the Cheddar interview, "I'm not welcoming him. I won't rejoice in him being president. I don't honor him."

In the presence of House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) a couple of days later at a Capitol Hill press conference, Waters backpedaled slightly:

I have not called for the impeachment yet. He's doing it himself. Let me just say that the statement I made was a statement in response to questions and pleas I'm getting from many citizens across this country. . . .

The fact that he is wrapping his arms around Putin while Putin is continuing to advance into Korea [sic], I think that he is leading himself into that kind of position where folks will begin to ask what are we going to do. And the answer is going to be, eventually, we've got to do something about him.

She apparently meant Crimea. But her point "we've got to do something" was essentially the view from the Left who couldn't stand the thought of leaving Trump's future up to voters for a second time.

Waters continued to gain the most media attention for the purpose of impeaching Trump, going on ABC's *The View* and speaking across the country about ousting the president—sometimes in the most inappropriate settings.

In September 2017, while delivering a eulogy for the late comedian Dick Gregory, she shouted, “We’re going to sanitize the White House. We’re not going to take what is happening in this country. Haven’t you taken enough?” She called Trump “this dishonorable human being who has the alt-right and the KKK in his Cabinet.”

Not surprisingly, PolitiFact didn’t swoop in to point out her defamatory statement that apparently Cabinet secretaries were alt-right or members of the Ku Klux Klan.

“When I get through with Donald Trump, he’s going to wish he had been impeached,” she continued during the eulogy.

MoveOn, DFA and Comey

Waters was talking, but Rep. Al Green (D-TX) and Rep. Brad Sherman (D-CA) were the first to introduce an impeachment resolution (H.Res. 13) against Trump. Rep. Steve Cohen (D-TN) later did the same.

Green and Sherman called for ousting Trump from office for his firing of FBI Director James Comey, alleging that Trump was trying to deter the Russia investigation and the investigation of his former National Security Adviser Michael Flynn. The Comey firing essentially reinforced the prior biases of special interest groups that were waiting for a reason to impeach Trump.

Democracy for America, a left-wing nonprofit that rose from the ashes of the 2004 Howard Dean presidential campaign, issued a message to House Democrats calling Trump’s firing of Comey “a repeat of Richard Nixon’s most notorious actions during the Watergate scandal.” It also demanded impeachment and insisted the move wouldn’t harm Democrats in the 2018 midterms.

“Democrats should run on an inclusive, populist agenda of free college and paid family leave, but shouldn’t shy away from supporting impeachment,” Neil Sroka, spokesman for Democracy for America, told Fox News. “Democratic

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Today, we’re doing something we’ve never done before in the history of MoveOn: We’re calling for the impeachment of the President of the United States.

candidates in deep blue districts can and should be for impeachment.”

After his firing, Comey testified to the Senate Intelligence Committee in June 2017 and revealed virtually nothing that wasn’t already known.

However, MoveOn.org immediately sent a fundraising email having found the Comey testimony so compelling that they had no choice but to support Trump’s impeachment. In all likelihood, the email was written before Comey’s testimony. MoveOn.org is an all-purpose progressive activist group today but was ironically founded in 1998 to fight the Bill Clinton impeachment.

“Today, we’re doing something we’ve never done before in the history of MoveOn: We’re calling for the impeachment of the President of the United States,” the MoveOn email said. “The drive to impeachment won’t be quick or easy. We’ll need to sustain a big, powerful effort, so we’re asking you: Will [you] chip in \$5 a month to press for the full truth about and accountability for Donald Trump?”

For his part, Cohen offered a kitchen-sink impeachment process that would include obstruction of justice, emoluments, and saying mean things about federal judges and reporters—deemed as undermining the independent judiciary and the free press.

The House of Representatives would actually vote on impeachment by the end of December when Green mustered enough support from far-left members to bring the measure to the floor. When Rep. Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) made a motion to table the measure, the House was set to take its first vote on impeaching Trump.

The charge in the Green-Sherman resolution (H.Res. 646) was not obstruction of justice, but rather “associating the majesty and dignity of the presidency with causes rooted in white supremacy, bigotry, racism, anti-Semitism, white nationalism, or neo-Nazism.” Although the Green measure was defeated when 126 Democrats joined all Republicans, the news was that 58 Democrats voted to advance impeachment.

Democratic leaders generally said wait for the Mueller report. That didn’t stop Green from introducing another impeachment resolution (H.Res. 705) in January 2018, seeking to impeach Trump for referring to “sh—hole countries.” This time the resolution gained 66 votes from Democratic House members.



Credit: Gage Skidmore. License: <https://bit.ly/30CaH0L>.

Tom Steyer bought pro-impeachment ads in all 50 states and denied that he was planning to run for president early on. He, of course, eventually did run for president and had an email list at his disposal.

Tom Steyer's Town Hall Road Show

Loud voices such as Waters' were not going to convince rank and file members. But far-left members of Congress could rally the rabid anti-Trump base that would in turn (often through assorted advocacy groups) pressure members.

No one devoted more resources to this than billionaire Tom Steyer, who was essentially the financial backbone of Impeach 45 Inc.

The California hedge fund manager and Democratic mega-donor who spent \$90 million to get Democrats elected in 2016, launched NeedToImpeach.com in October 2017. The online petition gained millions of names and email addresses. Steyer bought pro-impeachment ads in all 50 states and denied that he was planning to run for president early on. He, of course, eventually did run for president and had an email list at his disposal.

Steyer also ran the green nonprofit NextGen America. During his climateering, Steyer gave a speech saying: "If we win in 2020, they [Republicans] are done forever. But it's scary for us, too, because if they win, literally it could be the end of the world."

If Democrats win in 2020, and the world doesn't end, Steyer might proclaim crisis averted since you can't prove a negative. If Republicans win and the world doesn't end, he may have some explaining to do about his definition of "literally."

Steyer also sent a copy of Michael Wolff's discredited book, *Fire and Fury: Inside the Trump White House*, to all 535 members of Congress.

Steyer, who lives in San Francisco, had been a Pelosi confidant, and she hosted him at her box for the 2016 Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia. But in this case, Pelosi reportedly found him to be a headache when it came to the drive to win the midterms. She didn't want to talk about impeachment.

The Need to Impeach campaign thought differently, sending out guides to the more than 5,100 Democratic congressional candidates in 2018 who were running in primaries across the country. The impeachment guides assured the candidates:

Nothing is preventing Democrats from promoting an agenda focused on building a fairer economy, improving the health care system, and creating a more equal and just society—while also underscoring the need to impeach this president.

The guides then rattled off every supposedly impeachable offense against Trump, whether it involved alleged illegalities or not or was supported by any evidence. The guides listed collusion with Russians, obstruction of justice in firing James Comey, violations of the emoluments clause, advocating racist violence in his comments on Charlottesville, and abuse of power by pardoning Joe Arpaio, the ex-sheriff of Maricopa County, Arizona, for criminal contempt for disregarding a court order.

The guides went out two weeks ahead of more than a dozen debates sponsored by NexGen America, his environmental group. The two were separate entities, but the timing indicates how eager Steyer was to make Trump's ouster a part of the 2018 campaign.

Steyer started spending money and traveling for 30 town hall meetings around the country in districts with anti-impeachment or wait-and-see Democrats. The goal seemed to be instilling fear of a primary, or at least depressing the turnout in the general election if Democrats were not on board.

In one instance, Steyer held a town hall meeting in Arlington, Virginia, to pressure Rep. Don Beyer, an establishment Democrat, to back impeachment. "The representative of this district, Don Beyer, is not in favor of impeachment, even though I think there are 90,000 people from this district who signed our petition," Steyer said at the town hall, later adding, "This is a heavily Democratic, progressive district. . . . I think you guys should ask him for the reason."

Beyer was reelected in 2018 but stated his view on impeachment had changed—and it sounded as if the Steyer minions had gotten to him. He said his change of heart was based on his constituents’ “belief in the need to launch an impeachment inquiry—as expressed to me in calls, letters, and conversations—has grown to a crescendo.”

CC _____
Rep. Don Beyer (D-VA) stated his view on impeachment had changed after a Tom Steyer town hall—and it sounded as if the billionaire’s minions had gotten to him.

New House Majority

Despite the pressure, enough Democratic candidates in red and purple districts ran as moderates, vowing to oppose impeachment and many vowing to vote against Pelosi as speaker—two promises that most would break. Thanks in large part to these promises, Democrats recaptured the House majority.

Others didn’t run to the center, such as members of what would become “the Squad.”

After MoveOn, Democracy for America, and Tom Steyer made some noise, we found that Free Speech for People was still around and still very much part of the Impeach 45 Inc.

Bonifaz, the organization’s president, co-wrote an op-ed with newly elected Rep. Rashida Tlaib (D-MI) in the *Detroit Free Press*, published the day before Congress reconvened:

President Donald Trump is a direct and serious threat to our country. On an almost daily basis, he attacks our Constitution, our democracy, the rule of law, and the people who are in this country. . . .

Each passing day brings more pain for the people most directly hurt by this president, and these are days we simply cannot get back. The time for impeachment proceedings is now.

The day after the op-ed appeared, Tlaib made her now infamous comment, “We’re going to impeach the mother f—er.”

Now Speaker of the House again, Pelosi had no interest in what the hardliners in her caucus wanted to pursue. Pelosi told the *Washington Post* in March:

I’m not for impeachment. . . . Impeachment is so divisive to the country that unless there’s something so compelling and overwhelming and bipartisan, I don’t think we should go down that path, because it divides the country. And he’s just not worth it.

The “not worth it” comment was before the release of the Mueller report that cleared Trump and his campaign of any conspiracy with the Russian government to meddle in the 2016 election. But Pelosi didn’t know with certainty what Mueller would conclude. So she was essentially writing off impeachment for what—at least in theory—might have been a truly horrific act of treachery against the United States if there had been any evidence. That’s presuming Pelosi ever thought the Mueller probe was legitimate.

Thus, it’s difficult to understand why the speaker seemed horrified months later by an improper phone call with the president of Ukraine—one in which no Democrat has ever been able to identify a crime.



Democratic leaders generally said wait for the Robert Mueller report. That didn’t stop Rep. Al Green (D-TX) from introducing another impeachment resolution (H.Res. 705) in January 2018, seeking to impeach Trump for referring to “sh—hole countries.”

Credit: Federal Bureau of Investigation. License: Public domain.

It's not that Pelosi had a change of heart. It's that political circumstances had changed. Instead of continuing to insist on an impeachment that was "compelling and overwhelming and bipartisan," she settled for unconvincing, underwhelming, and extremely partisan.

Similarly, Rep. Jerry Nadler (D-NY), chairman of the House Judiciary Committee—where impeachment inquiries used to be held—said initially an impeachment should be bipartisan. Then, Nadler got a primary opponent in Lindsey Boylan, whose chief complaint was that the incumbent hadn't moved to impeach Trump yet. Nadler remembered that in his home state Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY) had shocked a ten-term incumbent establishment Rep. Joe Crowley (D-NY) in the 2018 primary election, and Nadler didn't want to suffer the same fate.

Tlaib of Michigan and Ocasio-Cortez of New York would join Ilhan Omar of Minnesota and Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts to form "the Squad," which would go on to annoy Pelosi and even play the race card against her.

After Trump disparaged the Squad in a tweet, it was yet another ground for impeachment, according to Green's thinking.

Green pushed yet a third impeachment resolution (H.Res. 498) to a vote before the full House on July 17, 2019, that described Trump's tweet about the Squad as racist:

In all of this, the aforementioned Donald John Trump has, by his statements, brought the high office of the President of the United States in contempt, ridicule, disgrace, and disrepute, has sown seeds of discord among the people of the United States, has demonstrated that he is unfit to be President, and has betrayed his trust as President of the United States to the manifest injury of the people of the United States, and has committed a high misdemeanor in office. Therefore, Donald John Trump by causing such harm to the society of the United States is unfit to be President and warrants impeachment, trial, and removal from office.

The House again tabled Green's resolution. But this time, 95 Democrats voted against tabling the impeachment resolution, about twice as many as Green's first resolution. A bipartisan 332 voted to table it. Among those who voted with Green was Nadler—by this point worried about his primary challenger.

Fourth Time's a Charm

For trigger-happy Democrats, the third floor vote on impeachment wasn't a charm—but the fourth time would be.

The anonymous whistleblower complaint about the Ukraine phone call and investigating Hunter Biden's misdeeds abroad presented another rationale for Democrats. Pelosi and the self-professed moderate Democrats were—for the most part—exhausted.

The new impeachment inquiry certainly created work for left-wing organizations. Among the new ones to pounce on the Ukraine saga was ImpeachmentHQ. It functioned as a rapid response campaign "war room," sending out press links and spin to the media. ImpeachmentHQ was a joint effort of Defend the Republic and Stand Up America.

Stand Up American is an advocacy group founded and led by Sean Eldridge, a former unsuccessful Democratic congressional candidate and spouse of Facebook co-founder Chris Hughes. Veteran Democratic communications operative Zac Petkanas, the president of Petkanas Strategies, was the director of Impeachment HQ. Petkanas Strategies houses Defend the Republic, a liberal advocacy group.

After an investigation run mostly by the House Intelligence Committee, the House Judiciary Committee approved the two weakest and most undefined impeachment articles in history: abuse of power and obstruction of Congress—neither of which are crimes.

While the Judiciary Committee approved an abuse-of-power article against President Richard Nixon, the Watergate impeachment articles also included obstruction of justice—an actual crime under federal statute. Clinton was impeached for perjury and obstruction of justice, actual crimes under statute. The full House in fact rejected an abuse-of-power charge passed by the House Judiciary Committee. Even the impeachment of Andrew Johnson—widely regarded as discredited by modern historians—was based on violating an existing law duly enacted by Congress, the Tenure of Office Act. Though, the Supreme Court would find the law unconstitutional decades later.

Nevertheless, the Left was jubilant on impeachment day. Waters wasn't shy about crowing on the House floor the day of the vote:

History will remember those who were willing to speak truth to power. Yes, I called for Trump's impeachment early. This is our country. Our foremothers and our forefathers shed their blood to build and defend this democracy. I refuse to have it

undermined. I wholeheartedly support this resolution. I'm proud that in the final analysis, justice will have been served in America and Donald Trump will have been impeached.

On December 18, 2019—almost 21 years to the day the Republican-controlled House voted to impeach Clinton in 1998—the Democrat-controlled House voted to impeach Trump on both charges.

After the House voted to make Trump only the third president in American history to be impeached, objective journalists with the *Washington Post* recognized the somber gravity of the moment by openly celebrating.

CC —————
Nevertheless, the Left was jubilant on impeachment day. Rep. Maxine Waters (D-CA) wasn't shy about crowing on the House floor the day of the vote.

Post reporter Rachael Bade tweeted a photo of four of her *Post* colleagues at a restaurant table with food and drink, smiling brightly that said, "Merry Impeachmas from the WaPo team! [Paul Kane] is buying...w/ [Karoun Demirjian] [Seung Min Kim] [Mike DeBonis]." Bade later deleted the tweet, though not before enough screen shots were taken.

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Green, who pushed the first three floor votes, was both happy and honest during a MSNBC interview. With four impeachment votes, the law of averages was almost on his side. "Well, the genesis of impeachment, to be very candid with you, was when the president was running for office," Green told MSNBC.

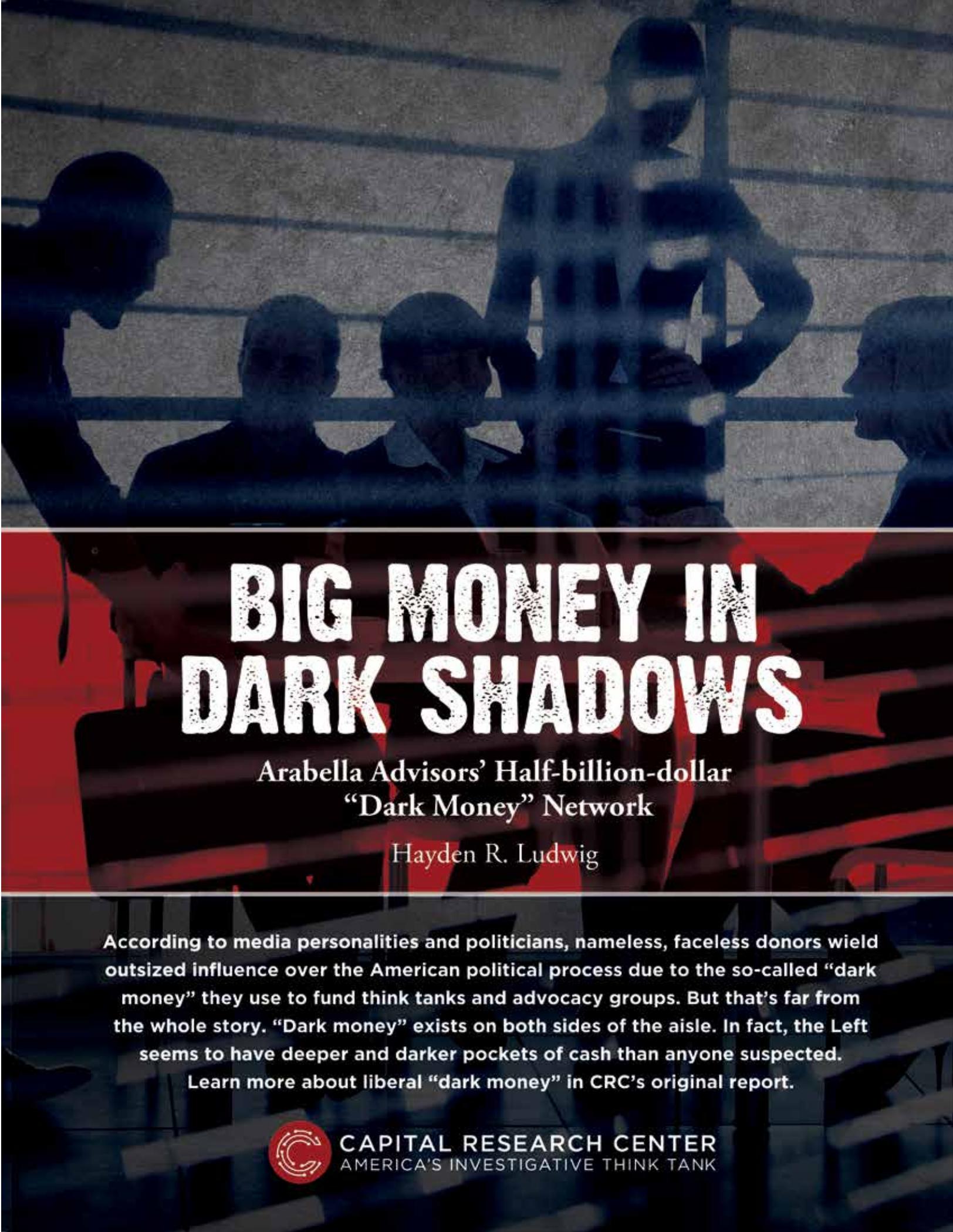
Surprising no one, Trump was acquitted in a Senate trial, with a vote mostly along party lines.

But the radical politicians and advocacy groups that made up Impeach 45, Inc.—a not entirely coordinate effort but one with a common goal—got what they wanted: A Scarlet I on Trump's place in history alongside Bill Clinton and Andrew Johnson.

Just as the law of averages worked in the favor of a House finally getting that Scarlet I vote, Green is counting on the law of averages eventually working in a Senate trial as well if Trump is reelected, noting on C-SPAN:

There is no limit on the number of the times the Senate can vote to convict or not a president—no limit to the number of times a House can vote to impeach, or not, a president.

Read previous articles from the Deception and Misdirection series online at [CapitalResearch.org/category/deception-and-misdirection/](https://www.CapitalResearch.org/category/deception-and-misdirection/).



BIG MONEY IN DARK SHADOWS

Arabella Advisors' Half-billion-dollar
"Dark Money" Network

Hayden R. Ludwig

According to media personalities and politicians, nameless, faceless donors wield outsized influence over the American political process due to the so-called "dark money" they use to fund think tanks and advocacy groups. But that's far from the whole story. "Dark money" exists on both sides of the aisle. In fact, the Left seems to have deeper and darker pockets of cash than anyone suspected.

Learn more about liberal "dark money" in CRC's original report.

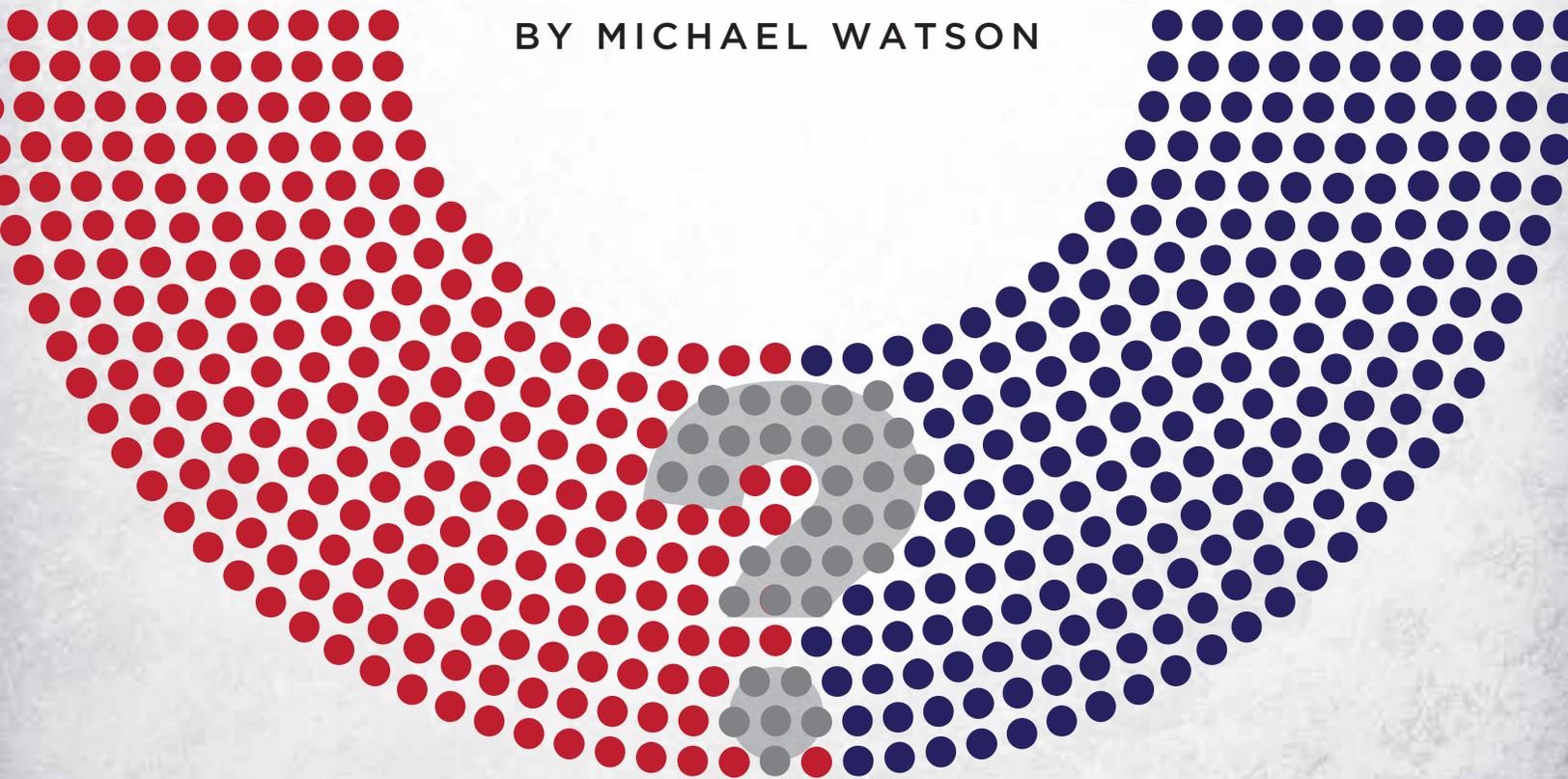


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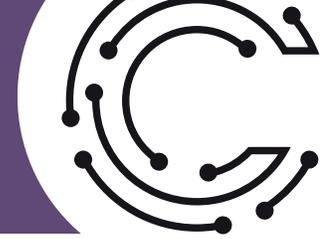
THE MYTH OF NON-PARTISAN DISTRICTS:

AN EXPERIMENT IN REDISTRICTING REFORM

BY MICHAEL WATSON



CAPITAL RESEARCH CENTER
AMERICA'S INVESTIGATIVE THINK TANK



UNEARTHING THE TIDES NEXUS

By Hayden Ludwig

Summary: *The modern pass-through funding model dates back to the mid-1970s, when entrepreneurial political activist Drummond Pike created the Tides Foundation, launching the pass-through scheme that now dominates the nonprofit netherworld. Pike also pioneered fiscal sponsorship for ideological nonprofits, incubating numerous liberal activist groups that still influence politics today. Tides is a “dark money” behemoth of the Left, unmatched by many leading pass-throughs on the political right.*



Credit: RENACERCHANNEL. License: <https://bit.ly/33Hm6Bt>.

Today’s Left has hundreds of mega-donors and scores of pass-through funders specializing in funneling anonymous grants to activists. Liberal critics of so-called money-in-politics call this unaccountable cash “dark money”—at least when it’s spent by conservatives.

But the modern pass-through funding model dates back to the mid-1970s, when entrepreneurial political activist Drummond Pike created the Tides Foundation, launching the pass-through scheme that now dominates the nonprofit netherworld. Pike also pioneered fiscal sponsorship for ideological nonprofits, incubating numerous liberal activist groups that still influence politics today.

This pillar of the Left is a “dark money” behemoth unmatched by many leading pass-throughs on the political right. In 2017, for instance, Tides poured out \$254 million in expenditures; DonorsTrust, a prominent conservative pass-through, paid out \$113 million that year. There are bigger funders out there, but few have shaped nonprofit activism like Tides.

Drummond Pike was a longtime board member of the Environmental Working Group, which has been criticized for exaggerating health risks from pesticides and in 1999 published a report falsely alleging a link between autism and vaccines.

Tides now encompasses eight separate but closely aligned groups collectively called the Tides Nexus. The Tides Nexus is like a body: Each limb plays a distinct role in support of the others, and a central “brain” coordinates the entire operation. It’s this wide array of services that is Tides’s real value to the Left as a one-stop shop for politically minded donors.

“Dark Money” Pioneer

Like so many major activist groups, the Tides Foundation has its origins in the 1970s, a decade that gave rise to the Left’s organized political nonprofits. Drummond Pike began his activist career in the early 1970s as executive director of the Youth Project, a now-defunct project of the Center for Community Change, which still advocates for a bevy of left-wing policies today. Little information remains about the Youth Project, which existed from 1970 to 1984, although it seems to have

served as a gateway for many future key activists, judging by past staffers:

- Heather Booth, founder of Midwest Academy and ex-president of Citizen Action;
- Wade Rathke, ACORN co-founder and founding Tides board member;
- Gary Delgado, liberal documentary filmmaker and ACORN co-founder;
- Bill Mitchell, anti-nuclear activist; and
- Margery Tabankin, director of the Streisand Foundation and former director of the Arca Foundation.

Hayden Ludwig is a research analyst at CRC.



Like so many major activist groups, the Tides Foundation has its origins in the 1970s, a decade that gave rise to the Left's organized political nonprofits.

Drummond Pike

Drummond Pike retired from leading the Tides Nexus of organizations in 2011 to join Equilibrium Capital LLC, a for-profit investment company that emphasizes environmental “sustainability.” He left Equilibrium in 2014 to advise Ultra Capital LLC, which invests in “sustainable infrastructure projects in the water, waste, energy, and agriculture sectors.” From 2013 to 2016 Pike was a board member for Growstone, a “green” technology firm that uses recycled glass to manufacture soil mixes and “green roof” products. In 2017, he became board chair of Good Planet Laboratories, which makes similar products. Since 2010, Pike has also owned a three-acre vineyard growing Cabernet Sauvignon grapes in California’s Sonoma Valley, north of San Francisco. Left-wing activism pays.

The Youth Project was co-founded by the late activists Lenny Conway and Richard “Dick” Boone, founder of the left-leaning Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, a Saul Alinsky associate, and director of the Community Action Program in the Office of Economic Opportunity for the Johnson administration. Pike later described the Youth Project in 2019:

Edgy, focused on low- and moderate-income communities, it drew inspiration from both the [Saul] Alinsky organizing tradition and from the more recent National Welfare Rights Organization, but had ambitions more akin to the farm labor organizing in the upper Midwest during the early part of the twentieth century.

More importantly, the Youth Project had a unique strategy for channeling donations from young people with inherited wealth into left-wing activism, a model that Pike ultimately adapted for the basis of the Tides Foundation. In 1976, Pike

became director of the newly formed Shalan Foundation in San Francisco, a “social justice” funder that closed in 1993. According to multiple reports, Pike was soon approached by a wealthy New Mexico couple interested in making anonymous donations to an activist group, a request the Shalan Foundation could not accommodate.

Ironically, the need for donor anonymity—what many liberals today deride as “dark money”—was the catalyst for the creation of the Tides Foundation later that year.

According to the *New York Times*, Jane Bagley Lehman—heiress to the R.J. Reynolds family tobacco fortune and president of the North Carolina-based Arca Foundation—moved to California in 1976, where she provided the seed capital for Pike’s new organization. Lehman served as chairwoman of Tides for 12 years until her death in 1988. Tides continues to give out an annual Jane Bagley Lehman Award to activists in her memory.

Tides is built around the use of donor-advised funds (DAFs), a kind of “charitable savings account” in which donors gift funds to grow in Tides’ investment accounts before advising Tides to pay out the funds in grants to other (typically left-wing) nonprofits.

DAFs have been in existence since 1931, when the New York Community Trust invented them as a means to incentivize philanthropists to give during their lifetimes by engaging them as advisors in the grantmaking process. But Pike is credited with popularizing DAFs among ideological (or “mission-driven”) nonprofits such as Tides and Donors Trust, something he now seems to regret.

In 2018, Pike wrote in the *Chronicle of Philanthropy* that he and some Tides colleagues “should share some of the blame” for the rapid growth in so-called commercial DAF providers—donor-advised funds held by 501(c)(3) public charities associated with for-profit investment firms such as Charles Schwab and Fidelity Investments. Pike believes that Tides’s success in the 1980s probably inspired the creation of the Fidelity Investments Charitable Gift Fund in 1991. Today, the fund is possibly the largest public charity in America, disbursing \$7.3 billion in 2019.

“We borrowed a sleepy device [DAFs] deployed by community foundations to attract donors,” he wrote, normalizing that model with the IRS and laying the groundwork for other DAF-based organizations. Now he’s critical of their widespread use. “DAFs should be treated with rules mirroring those applied to private foundations: donor disclosure, the same limits on deductions for gifts of stock, and minimum annual payouts calculated on a fund-by-fund basis.”

The Tides Nexus

Since the 1970s, however, Tides has become a brand that now encompasses eight distinct organizations, seven 501(c)(3) public charities and one 501(c)(4) advocacy group, collectively referred to as the Tides Nexus.

At the top of the Nexus is the Tides Network, a master entity formed in 2005. The Tides Network serves as the “brain” for other Tides groups, providing management services to them in exchange for service fees and paying their employees’ salaries (a common nonprofit practice).

Directly beneath the Tides Network are the Tides Foundation, which handles pass-through grantmaking operations; the Tides Center, which handles fiscal sponsorship of new groups; and Tides Inc., which owns office space (Tides Converge) in San Francisco’s plush Presidio district and rents it to Tides organizations and friendly groups on the left.

The Tides Foundation controls the Harding Rock Fund, a 501(c)(3) that exists solely to manage the Tides Foundation’s assets. Similarly, the Tides Foundation and Tides Center share joint ownership of the Tides Two Rivers Fund, which provides asset management services to its parent groups (the details of which are unclear).

The Tides Canada Foundation and its “sister,” Tides Canada Initiatives Society, operate in Vancouver, Canada, but file annual IRS Form 990 reports. Those reports suggest that the foundation exists to funnel money to the Initiatives Society. In 2018, all of its grants went to its “sister,” which conducts environmental activism programs.

Tides Advocacy is the sole 501(c)(4) advocacy nonprofit in the Tides Nexus and parallels both the Tides Foundation as a pass-through to other 501(c)(4) groups. And the Tides Center as an incubator of new advocacy nonprofits. The group has undergone a few name changes since its creation in 1992. First, it was the Tsunami Fund, then Tides Advocacy Fund in 2006, followed by the Advocacy Fund in 2010 (possible to distance itself from the remaining Tides groups), and Tides Advocacy in 2017. For an unknown reason, Tides Advocacy remains legally unrelated to the other Tides groups

Each of the eight organizations plays a slightly different role in the Tides Nexus and together they form a potent weapon for influencing American politics.

(by the IRS definition of related organizations), even though its board of directors overlaps with other Tides groups and it received nearly \$24 million from the Tides Foundation between 2013 and 2018. It also has a separate website from the main Tides site.

Each of these organizations plays a slightly different role in the Tides Nexus and together they form a potent weapon for influencing American politics.

Tides Foundation: Funneling Billions

As a leading pass-through, the Tides Foundation has made grants to activist groups covering almost every policy issue on the left. In 2009, it donated some \$3.6 million to Health Care for America Now (HCAN), the 501(c)(4) formed by the Bermuda-based foundation Atlantic Philanthropies to create an echo-chamber campaign to help pass Obamacare in 2010. (HCAN has since been revived as part of Arabella Advisors’ Sixteen Thirty Fund to defend Obamacare.)

In 2018 alone the Tides Foundation made over 1,400 grants, including six- and seven-figure payments to:

- America Votes, a leading get-out-the-vote group;
- The Aspen Institute, a left-leaning think tank;
- Blueprint NC, an activist group aiming to flip North Carolina to Democratic blue in 2020;
- Catalist, the Democrats’ primary data firm;
- The anti-death penalty Center for Death Penalty Litigation;
- The Colorado Civic Engagement Roundtable, a state voter mobilization group;
- Earthjustice, an environmental litigator and Sierra Club spin-off;
- The Indivisible Project, a radical anti-Trump group;
- The environmentalist League of Conservation Voters;
- Pro-abortion groups NARAL and Ms. Foundation for Women;
- Labor union-aligned National Domestic Workers Alliance;
- Pass-through funder NEO Philanthropy;
- Arabella Advisors’ New Venture Fund, a “dark money” giant;

- Planned Parenthood and its “action” arm;
- State Voices, a group coordinating the Left’s get-out-the-vote plan nationwide in 2020;
- The Transgender Law Center; and
- The Latino racial group UnidosUS (formerly National Council of La Raza).

- Bauman Family Foundation (Patricia Bauman): \$2.7 million
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation: \$2.3 million

It’s important to remember that nearly all of the \$291 million the Tides Foundation paid out in grants in 2018 originated with prior donors, usually individuals or foundations. Unlike mega-donors such as George Soros and the Ford Foundation, Tides is a *service*, charging management fees to its clients in exchange for its pass-through grantmaking services. And because it’s nearly impossible to trace Tides grants back to their original donors, this has the added effect of “washing” away the ties between the donor and the ultimate grant recipient. As Pike has put it, “Anonymity is very important to most of the people we work with.”

And the group’s finances attest to that. Between 2001 and 2018, the Tides Foundation collected a staggering \$2.4 billion in grants, accounting for 95 percent of its revenues over that period. Left-wing foundations (and those associated with key Democratic donors) are among Tides’ biggest donors over the last two decades:

- NoVo Foundation: \$76 million
- Ford Foundation: \$26 million
- Foundation to Promote Open Society and Open Society Foundations (George Soros): \$22 million
- Wilburforce Foundation: \$15 million
- Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Rockefeller Foundation, and Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors: \$11 million
- Angelica Foundation (James and Suzanne Gollin): \$11 million
- Bullitt Foundation (Dorothy Bullitt): \$9.4 million
- Wallace Global Fund: \$8.6 million
- William and Flora Hewlett Foundation: \$8.3 million
- Silicon Valley Community Foundation: \$6.4 million
- California Endowment: \$4.3 million
- Gill Foundation (Tim Gill): \$4 million
- W.K. Kellogg Foundation: \$3.1 million

The Tides Center, the Tides affiliate responsible for incubating new groups, has also received roughly \$10 million in government grants since 2003, including four grants over \$1 million during the Obama administration. It’s unclear what the purposes of these grants were. One \$1.5 million grant from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is for “promot[ing] transparency” in foreign governments; another \$1.5 million grant from the Department of Health and Human Services is for “nurse education.”

Tides Center: Incubation

While the Tides Foundation actually started incubating new groups in 1979, it spun off its fiscal sponsorship services into the Tides Center in 1996, possibly to insulate the main group from lawsuits against its spin-offs. Since then, it’s spawned many hundreds, possibly thousands of new groups, many of them ideological activist organizations.

Fiscal Sponsorship

Creating a new nonprofit can take months. Fiscal sponsorship offers a way for groups to begin operations well before receiving the prized determination letter from the IRS recognizing their tax-exempt status.

Under fiscal sponsorship the new nonprofit begins operating as part of a surrogate parent such as the Tides Center, usually in exchange for a fee. The Tides Center also offers administrative support, legal consultation, payroll and budget management, and office space until sponsees are ready to leave the nest. In theory, any 501(c)(3) or (501(c)(4) can serve as a fiscal sponsor to another group; however, it’s most common among service-oriented organizations such as Tides, Arabella Advisors, and Donors Trust.

People for the American Way (PFAW) is one of the more infamous Tides spin-offs, conceived in 1981 by television magnate Norman Lear to counter the so-called Religious Right. Eager to begin its anti-Reagan activism, Lear turned to Tides to incubate the fledgling group until the IRS approved its tax exemption eight months later. At that point,



Credit: TED Conference. License: <https://bit.ly/212QdZE>.

People for the American Way (PFAW) is one of the more infamous Tides spin-offs, conceived in 1981 by television magnate Norman Lear to counter the so-called Religious Right.

its assets were transferred to PFAW (initially called Citizens for Constitutional Concerns).

PFAW is perhaps most famous for leading the campaign to defeat the confirmation of Judge Robert Bork to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1987. PFAW is still on the bleeding edge of left-wing judiciary activism and has been present at nearly every anti-Trump protest covered by CRC in recent years, including the battle to confirm Justice Brett Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court in 2018.

Environmental Media Services (EMS), Environmental Working Group (EWG), and Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) are Tides spin-offs and some of the most influential environmental lobbies in the country. EMS (now the Science Communication Network) was founded by Arlie Schardt, communications director for Al Gore's 2000 presidential campaign. It manages the website RealClimate, which runs pieces by Michael Mann and other environmentalists.

Drummond Pike was a longtime board member of EWG, which has been criticized for exaggerating health risks from pesticides and in 1999 published a report falsely alleging a link between autism and vaccines. The NRDC is well-known for its involvement in "sue and settle" cases: lawsuits against the Environmental Protection Agency intended to force the agency to draw up new environmental regulations. It was also a leading agitation group against the construc-

tion of the Keystone XL pipeline, which would transport oil from Canada to refineries in Texas.

The three organizations were also involved in promoting the Alar apple scare in the late 1980s. In 1989, Fenton Communications, a major left-wing public relations firm, promoted a campaign on *60 Minutes* linking cancer rates in children with Alar, a substance used to prevent apples from rotting. They were joined by the NRDC, EWG, and EMS (which was sharing office space with Fenton), which claimed that "the average preschooler's exposure was estimated to result in a cancer risk 240 times greater than the cancer risk considered acceptable by [the EPA] following a full lifetime of exposure."

Those reports were further proliferated in the media by Fenton Communications, leading Gerber and Mott's to halt the use of Alar-treated apples in baby food and juice and statewide bans on the chemical in Maine and Massachusetts. The EPA briefly proposed a ban on the substance in 1989.

To say the fears were overblown doesn't do it justice. A lab study conducted by the American Council on Science and Health in 1999 showed that a consumer would need to consume over 5,000 gallons juice from Alar-coated apples *per day* to reach the level of the NRDC's cancer risk claims. Dr. Richard Adamson, director of the National Cancer Institute's Division of Cancer Etiology, later said: "The risk of eating an apple treated with Alar is less than the risk of eating a peanut butter sandwich or a well-done hamburger."

The NRDC *still* brags about its war on Alar today:

By spring [1989], apple purchases nationwide had dropped by as much as 60 percent, according to some estimates, with growers reporting losses of \$100 million. . . . Apple sales remained low through most of 1989, even among apple varieties that weren't typically exposed to Alar. And as the public grew more discerning of the Alar threat, its view of apples that were regularly treated (like McIntosh and Red Delicious) was tarnished further.



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In November 1990, Washington State apple growers—who produced the majority of Red Delicious apples at the time—filed a lawsuit against NRDC and CBS. Despite their best efforts, however, the growers couldn't prove that the facts in the *60 Minutes* broadcast were false, and their claims were dismissed. When the growers appealed, an appellate court countered by citing a lack of evidence that Alar was safe for children.

This was a landmark ruling—a victory for the First Amendment and the freedom of a nonprofit organization to research and report on matters of public health policy. It was a triumph for the public's right to know and the safety of future generations.

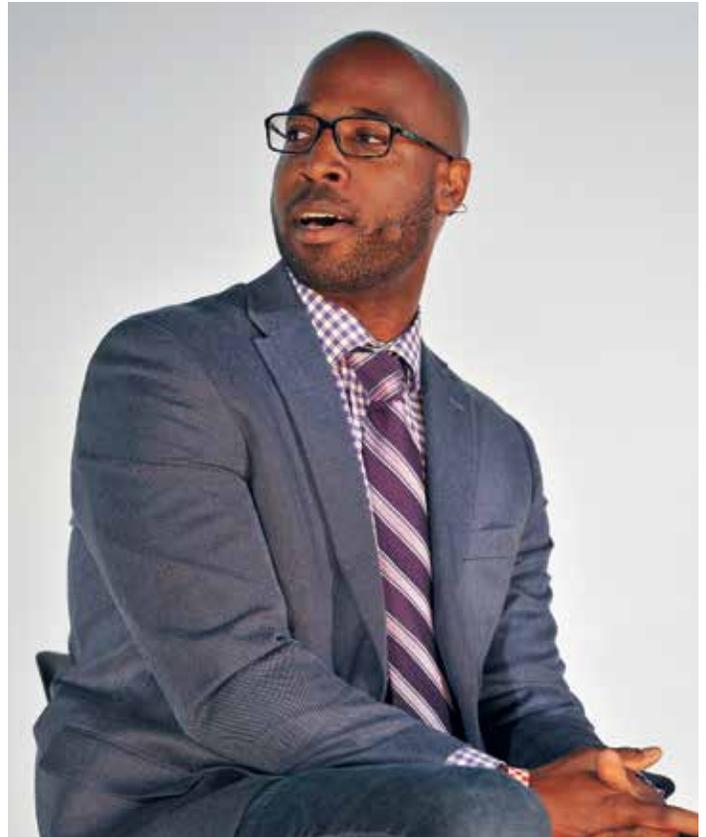
Tides Canada Foundation: Eco-Advocacy

Tides Canada Foundation, the Tides affiliate in Vancouver, is one of the most controversial groups in the nexus. It's really two separate 501(c)(3)-equivalents: Tides Canada and Tides Canada Initiatives Society, which receives funding from Tides Canada to support its environmental activism.

Tides Canada rose to prominence around 2010 when journalist Vivian Krause revealed that the group had quietly funneled \$15 million to 36 Canadian activist groups to protest against construction of oil pipelines from the Alberta tar sands to refineries in Texas—much of which originated with the Tides Foundation in the United States.

The Tides Foundation served as a pass-through for other environmentalist donors, including the Swiss-based Oak Foundation, which moved \$700,000 through it to Tides Canada in 2009 “to raise the visibility of the tar sands issue and slow the expansion of tar sands production by stopping new infrastructure development.” (Krause ultimately discovered that some \$300 million had flowed from American foundations to Canada's environmentalist groups between 2000 and 2012.)

In 2019, Tides Canada launched an in-house donor-advised fund (ImpactDAF) to channel more money into left-wing activism, part of a new development in philanthropy called “impact investing.” The minimum to open an account is \$1 million; all grants are measured against UN Sustainable Development Goals.



Credit: TechCrunch. License: <https://bit.ly/3iQM1w1>.

Bernard Coleman, a chief diversity officer for Hillary Clinton's 2016 campaign, the Democratic National Committee, and ridesharing company Uber.

Tides Advocacy: Pushing Policy

Tides Advocacy combines the pass-through and incubation efforts of the Tides Foundation and Tides Center in order to service 501(c)(4) groups, which are allowed to spend significantly more on lobbying and advocacy work than their 501(c)(3) counterparts.

Its board consists of Tides leadership and a few notables from the left-wing nonprofit world:

- Bernard Coleman, a chief diversity officer for Hillary Clinton's 2016 campaign, the Democratic National Committee, and ridesharing company Uber;
- Alice Kessler, former government affairs director for the gay marriage mega-lobby Equality California;
- Johanna Silva Waki, western states director for the pro-Democrat PAC EMILY's List; and Rajasvini Bhansali, director of the activist group Solidaire (itself a project of the Proteus Fund, another “dark money” funder).

In 2018, Tides Advocacy reported total revenues of \$40 million, including \$39.3 million in grants from other groups. Few of Tides Advocacy’s donors are known, but the Tides Foundation paid its “sister” \$13.5 million in 2018 (about 33 percent of its grant income that year) and \$6.9 million in 2017. None of the 2018 grants identify what the funds were used for, but the Tides Foundation’s grant descriptions for 2017 do—standouts include:

- \$10,000 for “Resist Here: West Virginia”;
- \$113,850 for “SIA Legal Team’s Halting the Criminalization of Abortion Project” (referring to a “reproductive justice” litigation group); and
- \$1 million split two ways: “Project 1: Removing unnecessary State restrictions on self-determine abortion care (\$350,00) Project 2: Halting the Criminalization (\$650,000).”

Unlike its sister groups, few of Tides Advocacy’s projects are known (and many are relatively small), but they tend to be more radical than the Tides Center’s projects.

The Democracy Labs provides online “grassroots organizing” training for would-be activists and Democrats running for office. It publishes “story maps,” visual propaganda for use by campaigns, on every from issue the opposing the Trump administration attempt to add a citizenship question to the 2020 Census to “environmental racism” and gun control. It’s allied with voter registration and campaign service groups such as Rock the Vote and Catalist. One of the group’s co-founders, Shareen Punian, is a Tides Advocacy board member; the other, Deepak Puri, is on the Tides Foundation’s board.

The Mass Liberation Project was created in 2019 and aims to “end mass incarceration and abolish the criminal legal system as we know it.” Its accomplishments are vague, but they’ve caught the eye of at least one liberal donor: Open Philanthropy, funded by Facebook co-founder Dustin Moskovitz, gifted it \$600,000 in 2019 “to support work on training and organizing for prosecutor accountability.”

Data for Progress provides voter file and polling data for Democratic campaigns. It was founded by Sean McElwee, a far-left activist who also created AbolishICE with the goal of dismantling U.S. Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE). Data for Progress supports the Green New Deal, Medicare-for-All, and championed socialist Sen. Bernie Sanders 2020 presidential campaign, declaring that “Progressives control the future of the [Democratic] Party.”



Credit: Gage Skidmore. License: <https://bit.ly/34Hr9iu>.

Community Justice Action Fund is a gun control group led by the former advocacy director for Giffords, a gun control PAC named for former Rep. Gabby Giffords (D-AZ), who was shot in a failed assassination attempt in 2012.

Community Justice Action Fund is a gun control group for “communities of color” led by the former advocacy director for Giffords, a gun control PAC named for former Rep. Gabby Giffords (D-AZ), who was shot in a failed assassination attempt in 2012. The group has its own “sister” at the Tides Center, Community Justice Reform Coalition. This pairing of a 501(c)(3) and a 501(c)(4) is common, especially among left-wing projects, since it allows each group to maximize its respective tax-deductibility and lobbying benefits of each IRS tax-exempt status.



The Appeal is a website and Tides Advocacy project that has demanded free housing as a “human right” and echoed the far Left’s call to abolish ICE.

Taking Control of Black Lives Matter

In July 2020, CRC reported that the Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation—one of the top Marxist-led groups in the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement—had transferred ownership from a relatively unknown fiscal sponsor to the Tides Center. Like other Tides projects, the BLM Global Network Foundation is not a standalone non-profit, and few of its donors can be identified. But CRC’s Robert Stilson traced grants to its original fiscal sponsor, Thousand Currents, from the NoVo Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and Borealis Philanthropy—all left-wing standbys. Stilson also revealed that Thousand Currents’ board of directors included convicted domestic terrorist Susan Rosenberg, who served a 16-year sentence in federal prison for possession of 740 pounds of unstable dynamite stolen from a Texas construction firm in 1980. Within hours of this revelation, the webpage for Thousand Currents’ board of directors was taken down. (Thousand Currents described Rosenberg as a “human and prisoner rights advocate.”)

While this transfer to the Tides Center reveals little of the BLM group’s internal workings and funders, it *does* confirm what early skeptics believed all along: Black Lives Matter is led by professional, Marxist activists. There’s simply no other reason to choose Tides unless your organization is made *by* the Left, *for* the Left.

Similarly, The Appeal is a website and Tides Advocacy project that criticizes law enforcement and existing criminal justice policy. The website criticized states’ handling of the Coronavirus, arguing that criminals should be released from incarceration to avoid getting infected with the virus. It has demanded free housing as a “human right” and echoed the far Left’s call to abolish ICE. The Appeal is closely affiliated with another Tides Center-Tides Advocacy project pair, the Justice Collaborative, which employs lawyers to file lawsuits on issues ranging from detention of illegal aliens on the Mexican border to providing “a government job to every person who wants one.”

From 2009 to 2010, Tides Advocacy ran Reform Immigration for America (RIFA), a coalition of 675 left-wing groups created to pressure the newly elected President Obama and Democratic Congress to enact comprehensive immigration reform. The group’s now-inactive website (available via Web

Archive) doesn’t identify its relationship to Tides Advocacy, but congressional records show that Tides Advocacy spent \$500,000 in 2009–2010 lobbying under the DBA name Reform Immigration for America (virtually the only lobbying Tides Advocacy has ever done, according to records).

Those funds were spent on “comprehensive immigration reform issues” (no bills are specified) in a period when many observers expected Democrats to fiercely pursue that issue in Congress. In 2010 alone, Sens. Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Lindsey Graham (R-SC) authored a joint op-ed calling for bipartisan immigration reform. Arizona passed SB-1070, considered the strictest anti-illegal immigration law in the nation (soon endorsed by future presidential nominee Sen. John McCain). And Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) introduced the DREAM Act, offering citizenship to young illegal immigrants who attend college or join the military. (The passage of Obamacare in March 2010 arguably took the wind from the immigration reform camp’s sails and laid the groundwork for the Tea Party and Republican wave in the November midterms.)

RIFA changed hands from Tides Advocacy to the Center for Community Change Action (likely in early 2010), the 501(c)(4) advocacy arm of the group that founded Pike’s Youth Project in the 1970s, before finally disappearing in 2018. Only one RIFA donor is known: the Tides Foundation, which passed \$204,000 in 2013 to the Center for Community Change for the project, the same year in which Congress debated the highly controversial Gang of Eight immigration reform bill. Where Tides’ money *ultimately* originated remains unknown.

Left-Wing Legacy

In the decades since the creation of Tides, other “dark money” pass-through groups have been formed, built on what Drummond Pike pioneered. Groups such as NEO Philanthropy, the Proteus Fund, and Arabella Advisors have made pass-through funding ubiquitous, while conservatives and liberals alike have adopted donor-advised funds as an effective model for moving money into ideological nonprofits. Tides can surely take some credit for massively expanding the field of political nonprofits—now an industry worth hundreds of millions or perhaps billions of dollars and arguably more influential than the political parties. Despite this competition, Tides will likely remain a pillar of the political Left for years to come.

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