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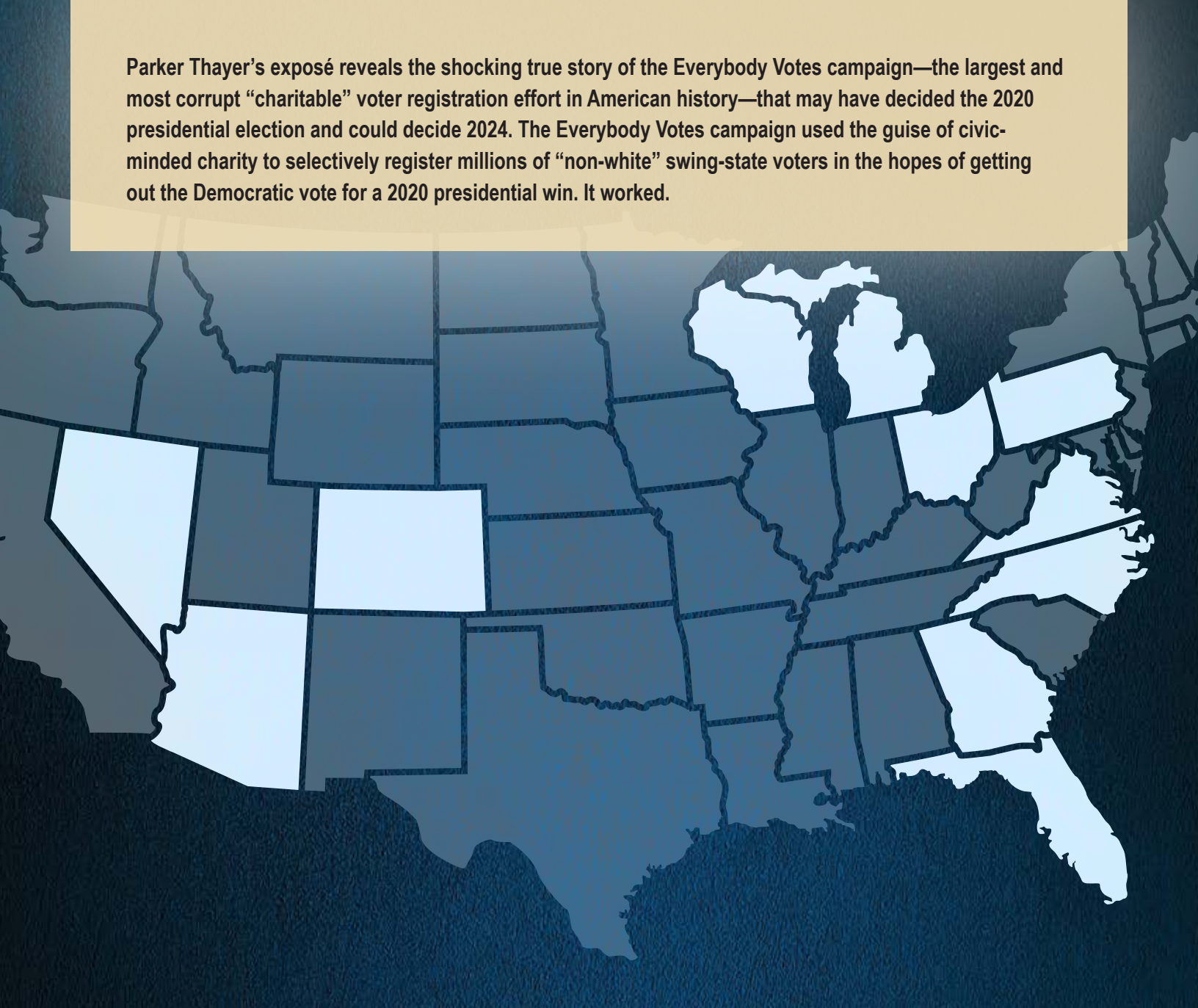
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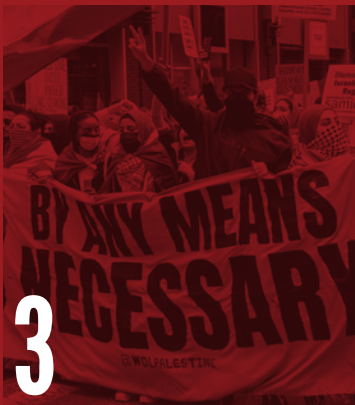
Parker Thayer's exposé reveals the shocking true story of the Everybody Votes campaign—the largest and most corrupt “charitable” voter registration effort in American history—that may have decided the 2020 presidential election and could decide 2024. The Everybody Votes campaign used the guise of civic-minded charity to selectively register millions of “non-white” swing-state voters in the hopes of getting out the Democratic vote for a 2020 presidential win. It worked.



HOW CHARITIES SECRETLY HELP WIN ELECTIONS

BY PARKER THAYER

Read the report at
<https://capitalresearch.org/article/report-how-charities-secretly-help-win-elections/>



COMMENTARY

Are Some Nonprofits Threatening National Security?

By Sarah Lee

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To understand the 2024 presidential election you must understand Arabella Advisors

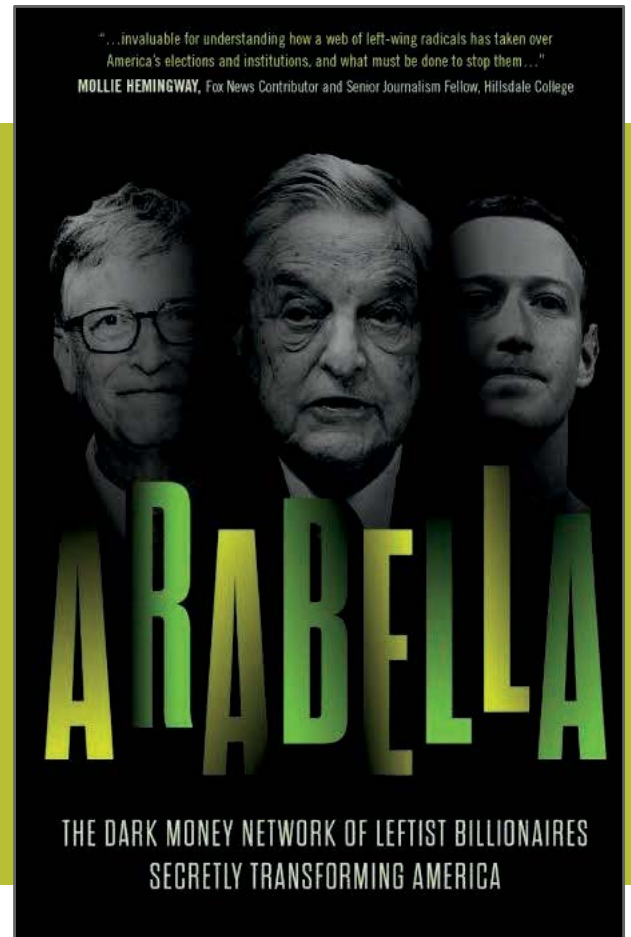
Scott Walter, Author
*Arabella: The Dark Money
Network of Leftist Billionaires
Secretly Transforming America*



Reviewed by Mollie Hemmingway
Fox News Contributor
Editor-in-Chief, The Federalist

“A handful of left-wing billionaires—including one who’s not even an American citizen—have so much power they can demand the

Democratic party do their radical bidding. As a result, riots, crime, racial and sexual grievances, attacks on the Supreme Court, and open borders dominate our politics. In *Arabella*, Scott Walter presents a compelling, deeply researched book that rips the mask off the billion-dollar “dark money” operation subverting America. Scott Walter and the Capital Research Center are invaluable for understanding how a web of left-wing radicals has taken over America’s elections and institutions, and what must be done to stop them from destroying the country.”



What people are saying



Michael Lee
U.S. Senator (R-UT)

“This book is a crucial expose of the myriad ways these groups interplay with left-wing “dark money” to shape the political landscape. Essential for those seeking to understand power and money dynamics in modern politics.”



Tucker Carlson
Political Commentator,
Tucker Carlson Network

“Ever heard of Arabella Advisors? Probably not. And that’s strange, since they’ve done a lot to destroy the world you grew up in. You should know, so read this book.”

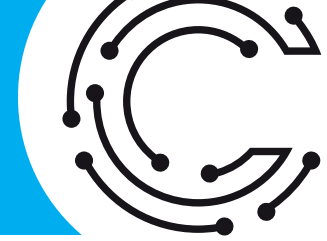
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ARE SOME NONPROFITS THREATENING NATIONAL SECURITY?

By Sarah Lee

After years of protests in American cities and the most recent upheaval on university campuses, congressional members in both chambers are beginning to take seriously the idea that parts of the American nonprofit sector may have been hijacked by special interests behind the scenes that are actively—and possibly illegally—contributing to the discord, and possibly even fomenting terrorism. Lawmakers have begun proposing investigations and legislation to address these concerns.

On May 14, Republicans on the House Oversight Committee sent a letter to Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen “requesting all suspicious activity reports (SARs) connected to 20 organizations that are reported to be leading, financing, and participating in the pro-Hamas, antisemitic, and anti-American protests occurring on college campuses across the U.S.”

The letter to Yellen is a nod to recent proposed legislation from both the House and Senate that give the Treasury Secretary new powers to investigate whether 501 C3 entities are violating their tax-exempt status by providing “material support” to already designated terror groups.

Unsurprisingly, this has led to consternation among some libertarians who see the new proposed legislation as an overreach along the lines of the Lois Lerner/IRS scandal during the height of the Tea Party movement.

Those concerns are valid. However, guardrails in the new proposed legislation allow nonprofits to challenge allegations and disprove them. The new legislation also uses existing laws—legally defined “material support” for already-designated terror groups—as a standard for inves-



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The House Oversight Committee has the advantage of a growing body of research on the 20 nonprofit groups they want to examine. Some of those groups—Students for Justice in Palestine and American Muslims for Palestine, for example—have known ties to huge, leftist funding networks.

tigation. These specifications mitigate the possibility of political targeting.

House Oversight has the advantage of a growing body of research on the 20 nonprofit groups they want to examine. Some of those groups—Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) and American Muslims for Palestine (AMP), for example—have known ties to huge, leftist funding networks.

As the Heritage Foundation reported in early May, citing Capital Research Center’s Ryan Mauro, these two groups and others behind the campus protests are known to be

Sarah Lee is director of communications and external affairs at CRC.

connected to massive funding streams, but the money trail is often difficult to track due to a phenomenon known as “fiscal sponsorship.”

From the report:

SJP receives funding from AMP, but is itself a fiscally sponsored project of the Westchester People’s Action Coalition Foundation, another far left funder...

Ryan Mauro of Capital Research Center, whose work tracking these networks is invaluable, emailed me that “WESPAC funds various revolutionary far-left/anti-Western groups.” But because it acts as SJP’s fiscal sponsor, there’s no transparency. “All donations transit through WESPAC and they aren’t required to publicly reveal anything about that relationship.”

But we can get a sense, from other disclosures, of who funds WESPAC and AMP. Mauro tells me that those who have given to WESPAC include the Elias Foundation (\$100,000); the Sparkplug Foundation (about \$100,000); Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors (\$80,000); George Soros’s Open Society (\$40,000); and the Groundswell

Foundation (about \$32,000). The Zakat Foundation has meanwhile given \$25,000 to AMP.

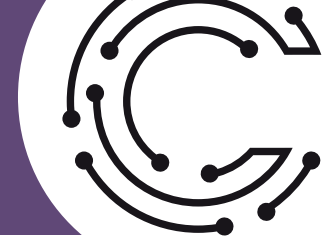
What House Oversight seems to want to determine is if these groups are connected to known terror networks as well; and, more importantly, if they’re engaged in illegally “materially” supporting terrorism (which can include training, funding, personnel, advice, and assistance, etc.). The lawsuits have already begun, so Yellen will almost certainly be forced to make the House request a priority.

As Americans have been slowly losing faith in their institutions, the philanthropic sector has not been spared. However, one consequence of that waning faith is a possible positive culture shift. Conservatives are now openly eschewing fear of being called conspiracy theorists and leaning into the sneaking suspicion that what they’ve been witnessing over the last several years, most recently on college campuses, has some organizing principle behind the scenes.

House Republicans are starting the process of finding out if they’re right. ■

This article first appeared in Townhall on May 23, 2024.

Read previous articles from the Commentary series online at capitalresearch.org/category/commentary/.



THE ADVOCACY GROUPS AND DONORS WHO FIGHT OVER IMMIGRATION AND BORDER SECURITY

By Ken Braun

Summary: *Gushers of money flow through the nonprofit sector to policy groups fighting over immigration policy, but the fiercest combatants on this front often can't agree on what they're even fighting about. Is it "immigration reform" or "border security" or something else? This analysis provides a look at some of the major players promoting both the restrictionist and expansionist immigration policy, some of the big institutional donors funding them, and what's hidden in some of their agendas.*

American border and immigration policy is a deeply awful mess.

That may be the only universally accepted statement on the matter. Otherwise, Americans and the advocacy groups working on these issues craft fighting words from what should otherwise be objectively simple phrases, such as "immigration reform" and "border security." Gushers of money flow through the nonprofit sector to policy groups that cannot even agree on the words to define problems, let alone on solutions.

This report is an attempt to *narrowly* examine that funding flow. It relies on the 2022 IRS filings from the advocacy nonprofits working on these issues and the philanthropic foundations funding them. For simplicity, the nonprofits examined are generally divided into two categories:

- **Restrictionists.** Nonprofits that oppose legalization for those already in the United States without authorization or support enhanced measures to prevent new unauthorized arrivals.
- **Expansionists.** Nonprofits that support legalization of noncitizens already in the United States without authorization and those that provide legal representation to persons who have arrived without explicit permission to do so but wish to remain.

Some that have been placed on the "restrictionist" side can justifiably claim to support expanding "legal" immigration, and some may also strongly favor the provision of legal assistance for persons claiming political asylum. Similarly, some placed on the "expansionist" side may favor policies that



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American border and immigration policy is a deeply awful mess.

increase border enforcement. In other cases, nonprofits may have missions that otherwise defy simple categories or are far broader than this narrow issue.

The author concedes these nuances. This narrow focus examines just some of the recent funding to nonprofits operating within this space and is not an examination of the more complicated matter of the specific missions of each group.

As noted, this is an enormously messy issue.

According to a Pew Research report from November 2023, 10.5 million "unauthorized immigrants" were living in the United States in 2021. Pew noted this estimate does "not reflect changes that have occurred since apprehensions and expulsions of migrants along the U.S.-Mexico border started increasing in March 2021" and that "encounters at the border have since reached historic highs."

A lot of them are from Venezuela. A CBS News analysis from September 2023 carried this headline: "Historic Venezuelan refugee crisis tests U.S. border policies."

Ken Braun is CRC's senior investigative researcher and authors profiles for InfluenceWatch.org and the Capital Research magazine.



On the other side, it's not clear the Institute for Policy Studies has any respect for border security or borders at all.

“More than 7.7 million people have fled Venezuela in recent years to escape its precipitous economic collapse and authoritarian rule—the largest displacement crisis ever recorded in the Western Hemisphere,” reported CBS.

Alternative headline: “Communism: celebrating more than a century of working in theory ... but not in practice!”

The Immigration Extremes

The humanitarian disaster in Venezuela is affecting a culturally Roman Catholic and Spanish speaking population, people who have historically become prosperous and patriotic American immigrants. This is also true of those who have fled communist disaster states, such as the Cubans of South Florida.

There is a strong moral and economic argument for allowing many more Venezuelans and people like them to become Americans.

But there is a counter argument for border security.

Even the successful integration of Cubans who fled the Castro regime over many decades carries the scars of a local crime wave that ensued after the 1980 Mariel Boatlift. Ten thousand success stories will quietly create a community, but the news headlines will always be driven by the one bad apple among them.

The current example is a 26-year-old Venezuelan man in the country illegally who was arrested and charged with the brutal February 2024 beating and murder of 22-year-old Georgia nursing student Laken Riley. This was a terrible atrocity, but actual American citizens are disproportionately more responsible for violent crime than illegal residents. A February 2024 analysis from the free-market Cato Institute, citing a comparison of homicide rates from Texas, reported that *native-born* Americans were nearly 17 percent more likely (per 100,000 people) to be convicted of murder than illegal immigrants.

To take just one example, in the year before Riley was beaten to death, 131 children and teenagers were shot to death in Georgia, with most or all of those weapons fired by other legal residents.

But leaving Venezuela aside, the current spike in U.S. border crossings is just a subset of the old debate. Figuring out what to do with those 10.5 million people already here illegally goes a long way toward resolving what to do with those lining up to follow them.

They represent a population that is larger than that of Michigan and 40 other states. There aren't many happy historical examples of governments moving 10 million people to where they don't wish to be. All factions in our national immigration debate, and their donors, are seeking a solution to this messy math problem.

To grasp how far apart the policy combatants can get with their calculations, consider the positions of the **Institute for Policy Studies** (IPS) and **Numbers USA**. They are the epitomes of the “expansionist” and “restrictionist” perspectives, but each in its own way uses arguments that could have been uttered by a communism-curious college freshman.

With rhetoric indistinguishable from many lefty climate groups, Numbers USA's “Sustainability Initiative” promotes the message that producing too many Americans will threaten the “carrying capacity” of the nation, cut off our access to nature, wipe out species, and worse. “We need to end our unsustainable resource consumption and persistent urban sprawl, and start preserving the quality-of-life for future generations,” warns a letter drafted by Numbers USA for its advocates to send to Congress.

Another proposed letter from Numbers USA urges support for “legislation aimed at stopping immigration increases” and claims American employers seeking more legal immigration “are mainly looking for any means to exploit cheaper labor” and “resorting to hiring child labor, suppressing wages, wage theft and forced labor while laying off thousands of Americans and discriminating against them in the hiring process.”

On the other side, it's not clear the Institute for Policy Studies has any respect for border security or borders at all. An October 2021 IPS webinar was titled “Dismantling Borders: A conversation with Harsha Walia” and was promoted as “a visionary conversation about dismantling borders and pursuing a world that honors the right to

migrate, the right to remain home, and the right to return after displacement.”

A July 2023 policy commentary from IPS reframed border enforcement as “militarizing immigration” and called for steep cuts to some or even all of it: “Billions of taxpayer dollars fund border patrol, and every dollar used for militarizing immigration is a dollar that doesn’t go toward public health, education, housing, or other real needs.”

The Major Expansionists

Overwhelmingly the largest gusher of nonprofit funding in the immigration debate floods into the expansionist side. There is so much that a sincere claim to measure it all would require filling a small book. This analysis does not make that ambitious claim.

At least 20 expansionist groups reported total revenue in excess of \$10 million for 2022:

- International Refugee Assistance Project (\$66.2 million in 2022 revenue)
- Kids in Need of Defense (\$56.4 million)
- Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (\$51.8 million)
- Make the Road New York (\$40 million)
- Faith In Action (\$38 million)
- Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services (\$33.3 million)
- Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors (minimum \$27.4 million for immigration policy)
- CASA (\$25.7 million)
- National Immigration Law Center (\$25.1 million)
- Immigrant Legal Resource Center (\$25 million)
- Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (\$18.4 million)
- Immigrant Justice Corps (\$17.7 million)
- American Immigration Council (\$16.5 million)
- Four Freedoms Fund (minimum of \$15 million for immigration policy)
- Make the Road States (\$13.1 million)
- United We Dream Network (\$13.1 million)
- Immigrant Defenders Law Center (\$12.1 million)
- Young Center for Immigrant Children’s Rights (\$10.4 million)

- Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (\$10.3 million)
- Capital Area Immigrants’ Rights Coalition (\$10 million)

As the names imply, several of these nonprofits help border crossers establish a legal reason to remain in the United States. Others, such as the American Immigration Council, are more broadly advocacy groups for expansionist policies.

Make the Road New York has boasted of leading the “broader immigrant rights resistance” and creating a “rapid response network throughout NYC and Long Island to respond to rumors of ICE raids around the clock and immediately deploy support teams to impacted families.” Make the Road States is an affiliated nonprofit that sponsors similar projects such as Make the Road New Jersey.

CASA has advocated for abolition of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), claiming it is a “rogue agency.” Faith in Action advocates for “citizenship, and more, for an estimated 11.3 million undocumented immigrants” and resistance to what it claims is “mass deportation.”

The Four Freedoms Fund is a project of NEO Philanthropy that was created to build the “capacity of the immigrant justice movement to ensure all immigrants, regardless of immigration status, have dignity, power to shape change, and agency to determine the quality of their life, community, and future.” Similarly, Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors sponsors expansionist funding channels, such as the Abundant Futures Fund.

Together, just these 20 groups reported raising more than \$500 million in 2022.

Beyond those 20 are many similar, but smaller groups, whose 2022 revenue still hit seven-figures. Typical examples among many include the New York Immigration Coalition



CASA has advocated for abolition of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), claiming it is a “rogue agency.”



Faith in Action advocates for “citizenship, and more, for an estimated 11.3 million undocumented immigrants.”

(\$7.8 million), the National Immigration Forum (\$4.9 million in 2022 revenue), and the California Immigrant Policy Center (\$4.8 million).

And beyond the groups with a singular or dominating focus on expansionist immigration, many more policy advocacy groups generally focus on many issues that also promote expansionist policies. The aforementioned and stridently left-wing Institute for Policy Studies fits in this category, but is a relatively small example, with \$5.8 million in 2022 revenue.

More lavishly funded examples of the generalist type would include:

- American Civil Liberties Union Foundation (\$201 million)
- Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (\$80.5 million)
- UnidosUS (\$59.8 million)
- Heartland Alliance for Human Needs & Human Rights (\$52.4 million)
- Center for American Progress (\$40.4 million)
- Community Change (\$16 million)

Funding the Expansionists

Major donors to the expansionist include but are by no means limited to these 10 giants of left-leaning philanthropy:

- JPB Foundation
- Ford Foundation
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- Carnegie Corporation
- Crankstart Foundation
- Foundation to Promote Open Society
- W. K. Kellogg Foundation
- Heising-Simons Foundation
- Evelyn & Walter Haas, Jr. Fund
- James Irvine Foundation.

In 2022, just these 10 gave or pledged for future payment a combined \$112 million to just the expansionist advocacy nonprofits and causes *mentioned so far* in this report.

Again, this is not a comprehensive total. A tally of the total giving of these 10 to all expansionist causes, and the giving of other institutional donors not quite as big as these 10 to the same causes, would be far higher and would include donations to expansionist advocacy groups *not mentioned* in this report.

For an idea of the full giving capability of these 10 lefty donors, consider that their annual financial firepower, as measured by the combined total of all their IRS-reported grants in 2022 to all causes, is more than *\$3.1 billion*.

JPB alone is responsible for \$39.7 million of the \$112 million. Examples of its current and pledged donations for 2022 included \$20 million to Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors for its immigration projects, \$1.2 million to the National Immigration Forum, and \$2.7 million to the American Civil Liberties Union Foundation for a grant to fund the “Immigrants’ Rights Project and Decriminalizing Poverty.”

The Ford Foundation accounted for \$27.6 million of the total. This included \$6.5 million to the National Immigration Law Center, and \$400,000 to the Heartland Alliance to provide “core support for the National Immigrant Justice Center.”

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation kicked in nearly \$13.3 million, including \$1.9 million to United We Dream and more than \$2.1 million for the ACLU Foundation’s immigration policy work.

The Carnegie Corporation gave or pledged almost \$10 million of the \$112 million. This included \$1.3 million to the Center for American Progress for its “immigration program” and \$1 million to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities for its immigration policy programs.

More than \$13.7 million was given or pledged to Faith in Action during 2022 by the combined efforts of Kellogg, Robert Wood Johnson, Haas, JPB and Ford.

Eight of the 10 major donors listed above combined to pledge or give more than \$11.9 million to the National Immigration Law Center: Ford, JPB, Carnegie, James Irvine, Haas, Robert Wood Johnson, Heising-Simons and Kellogg.

More than \$8.6 million in combined pledges or immediate grants were given to the Immigrant Legal Resource Center by Crankstart, Heising-Simons, Carnegie, JPB, Foundation to Promote Open Society (FTPOS), and Ford.

A combined \$15.1 million was given or pledged to the Four Freedoms Fund in 2022 by Ford, FTPOS, JPB, Carnegie, Haas, and Heising-Simons.

Kellogg joined Ford, FTPOS, JPB and Carnegie in giving or pledging \$27.4 million to the immigration projects sponsored by Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors.

Again, these are snapshots of the funding ability of the expansionist movement and not an attempt to fully quantify it.

The Restrictionists

The strict restrictionist side of the debate receives far less funding and is much easier to measure.

There are six nonprofits with a mission dedicated predominantly or exclusively to promoting restrictionist policies:

- Numbers USA Education and Research Foundation
- Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR)
- Immigration Reform Law Institute
- Center for Immigration Studies
- Progressives for Immigration Reform
- Californians for Population Stabilization

The combined annual revenue of all six, as measured by their 2022 IRS filings, was a little more than \$21.6 million, or less than even one, average-sized, expansionist nonprofit.

As reminders of just two examples, Make the Road New York (the nonprofit advocating mass resistance to ICE) and CASA (the one promoting abolition of ICE) respectively reported 2022 revenue of \$40 million and \$25.7 million.

While there are at least 20 expansionist nonprofits reporting revenue of more than \$10 million in 2022, the most richly funded narrow-focused restrictionist group—FAIR—reported total revenue of less than \$8.3 million. The FAIR total rises to only \$11.7 million even if combined with that of the Immigration Reform Law Institute, a public interest law firm affiliated with FAIR.

While at least 10 institutional donors gave or pledged a combined total of \$112 million to the largest expansionist nonprofits in 2022, there were just two institutional donors that gave or pledged more than \$1 million in 2022 to the six restrictionist groups.

The Colcom Foundation reported giving to all six of the restrictionist groups in 2022, for a total of more than \$9.6 million. And five of the six restrictionist nonprofits received 2022 funding from the Vanguard Charitable Endowment Program, for a combined total of nearly \$4.1 million.

The combined total from both (\$13.7 million) equals 63.5 percent of the combined revenue the six restrictionist nonprofits reported receiving in their 2022 reports (\$21.7 million).

People Are the Problem

Among its other 2022 grants, the Colcom Foundation also gave \$75,000 to Compassion and Choices, a nonprofit that advocates for medically assisted suicide, and a combined total of \$180,000 to three left-leaning climate advocacy nonprofits: the Environment America Research and Policy Center, the PennEnvironment Research and Policy Center, and the Environmental Integrity Project.

Each of the last three has either directly opposed the use of carbon-free nuclear energy or affiliated with the anti-nuclear U.S. Public Interest Research Group.

Opposition to immigration while promoting suicide and climate nonprofits that oppose abundant clean electricity could be construed as a “people are the problem” attitude. As far as Colcom’s grantmaking policy goes, that’s not an unfair assumption.

In 2019, the *New York Times* profiled Cordelia Scaife May, the benefactor of the Colcom Foundation:

She believed that the United States was “being invaded on all fronts” by foreigners, who “breed like hamsters” and exhaust natural resources. She thought that the border with Mexico should be sealed and that abortions on demand would contain the swelling masses in developing countries.



Credit: CUNY. License: <https://bit.ly/45Y8jUB>.

In 2019, the New York Times profiled Cordelia Scaife May, the benefactor of the Colcom Foundation: “She believed that the United States was ‘being invaded on all fronts’ by foreigners, who ‘breed like hamsters’ and exhaust natural resources.”

According to the report, May was great admirer of Planned Parenthood Federation of America founder Margaret Sanger and later became a board member of the International Planned Parenthood Federation.

A controversial figure, Sanger was also promoter of eugenics.

“Birth Control is not contraception indiscriminately and thoughtlessly practiced,” Sanger wrote in a 1923 *New York Times* essay. “It means the release and cultivation of the better racial elements in our society, and the gradual suppression, elimination and eventual extirpation of defective stocks—those human weeds which threaten the blooming of the finest flowers of American civilization.”

According to the 2019 *New York Times* report FAIR founder John Tanton was another controversial influence on Cordelia May:

Dr. Tanton, who died last month at 85, worked with Planned Parenthood and the Sierra Club and was the national president of Zero Population Growth in the 1970s. As the Baby Boom ebbed, he turned his attention to curbing immigration.

...

... Dr. Tanton wrote a nine-page proposal for funding from Mrs. May to start a group called the Federation for American Immigration Reform, or FAIR.

May died in 2005. The website of the Colcom Foundation includes an official history that makes no mention of her complicated past but concedes her “humanitarian perspective” was “often misunderstood.”

Today, Colcom as an institution does not promote animosity toward specific races but instead promotes the belief that the human race has too many participants:

Every nation on Earth must choose to do its part to end the extinction crisis by gradually shrinking its population. Citizens of every nation have the right and the duty to collectively choose to adopt a national ethic of limits to population growth and implement both family planning and immigration policies to realize these ethical principles.

The Vanguard Charitable Endowment Program, the other big benefactor of the main restrictionist groups, is a donor-advised fund (DAF). DAFs behave as an intermediary between a charitable donor and donation recipients, relieving the donor of recordkeeping and legal concerns involved in running their own foundation.

DAF’s also permit donors to give anonymously, an advantage when giving to controversial causes. A DAF is not legally required to disclose the source of the funding, only the destination.

However, in the case of Vanguard, it is possible to make an educated guess regarding the ultimate source of the donations that went to the restrictionists.

Anti-Humanist Environmentalism

As noted above, the 2022 IRS filing from Vanguard show donations to five of the six restrictionist groups, for a cumulative 2022 total of more than \$4 million. FoundationSearch, a charitable recordkeeping service, shows no donations to any of these groups by Vanguard prior to 2018.

But prior to 2018, a different DAF showed a similar giving pattern.

For period from 2007 through 2018, FoundationSearch shows a combined \$17.3 million was sent to the same five restrictionist groups from the Foundation for the Carolinas (FFTC).

As a further hint that the same donor may have switched giving platforms, the five restrictionist groups received no support from FFTC after 2018. The circumstantial evidence is that Vanguard filled in the support as FFTC dropped off.

Here is a comparison of 2022 donations from Vanguard and 2016 donations from FFTC:

Vanguard 2022: \$4,080,000 total

- FAIR (\$101,000)
- Numbers USA (\$3 million)
- Center for Immigration Studies (\$454,000)
- Progressives for Immigration Reform (\$425,000)
- Californians for Population Stabilization (\$100,000)

Foundation for the Carolinas 2016: \$4.3 million total

- FAIR (\$1 million)
- Numbers USA (\$2 million)
- Center for Immigration Studies (\$900,000)
- Progressives for Immigration Reform (\$200,000)
- Californians for Population Stabilization (\$200,000)

A January 2017 report from the *Los Angeles Times* reported that North Carolina billionaire Fred Stanback had given

\$397 million to the Foundation for the Carolinas, with the money flowing to immigration restrictionist groups, population control groups, and climate policy groups. The Numbers USA president told the newspaper that Stanback had been “very supportive of our efforts.”

As the FFTC was giving millions of dollars to abortion providers such as Planned Parenthood Health Systems, population reduction groups such as Population Connection (formerly Zero Population Growth), and radical climate groups such as the Rocky Mountain Institute, these same nonprofits were issuing annual reports that thanked Stanback by name for his multi-million-dollar gifts.

Profiling his giving habits in April 2018, a *Knoxville News* reporter aptly described Stanback as a “known proponent of anti-humanist environmentalism” and showed that he “donates regularly to the Sierra Club and the Natural Resources Defense Council.”

Some recipients of Stanback loot checked all the anti-human boxes. In its 2014 annual report the Center for Biological Diversity thanked Stanback as a donor at its highest giving level. This multi-radical climate advocacy group is opposed to conventional energy, is opposed to carbon-free nuclear energy, is supportive of male sterilization and has equated abortion rights with “environmental justice.”

As with Colcom’s Cordelia May Scaife, Stanback was also a supporter of FAIR founder John Tanton. A 1995 memorandum, purportedly written by Tanton and credited to him by the Energy and Environmental Legal Institute, recounts a meeting between him and Stanback.

Here is one of the many revealing observations:

Stanback said that *The Wall Street Journal* was controlled by Catholic interests, until it went public. He thought that perhaps this was behind their opposition to immigration control ... he thought the editorial staff was heavily Catholic.

The memo reports the pair also discussed abortion pills: “Stanback also mentioned having put money into promoting RU-486.” And it reveals this potential hypocrisy: “Stanback has three sons and a daughter... His wife also has three children, apparently from a previous marriage.”

A July 2019 Capital Research report on Stanback extensively covered his known and probable anti-humanist donations, including his support for restrictionist groups. This followed after the January 2017 *LA Times* profile, the April 2018 *Knoxville News* profile, and other contemporaneous stories and controversies that were specifically critical of Stanback’s

donations through the Foundation for the Carolinas to restrictionist nonprofits. (The regime media didn’t seem to care so much about his support for abortions and radical climate nonprofits).

It is not certain that Stanback moved his immigration restrictionist giving from FFTC to Vanguard after this coverage. If he did, it would be difficult to prove unless the reclusive 90-something billionaire fessed up.

It is also his legal right to give anonymously through either DAF. This is an important First Amendment protection.

The counterfactual for this circumstantial evidence is that there could be yet another anti-humanist billionaire who coincidentally adopted the same restrictionist giving pattern at Vanguard just as FFTC was putting an end to it.

It could happen.

The Pro-Human, Pro-Prospérité Perspectives

As with the immigration expansionist movement, the restrictionist side also has advocacy groups that address the issue as a piece of their mission, but not the main focus.

A prominent example is the Heritage Foundation.

With annual revenue exceeding \$100 million since 2019, Heritage is the flagship think tank of the conservative movement, which provides research positions on nearly every major foreign and domestic policy issue.

While Heritage should generally be classified as part of the restrictionist camp, the specific policy position is narrowly focused on concerns over the potential for criminal and terrorist elements to obtain illegal entry into the United States. Heritage research has also generally been negative towards proposals to provide legal amnesty for persons living and working in America without legal authorization.

FoundationSearch records dating back to at least 2007 do not show any support from the Colcom Foundation or Fred Stanback to the Heritage Foundation. This is not surprising. A reliable advocate of conservative positions, Heritage supports free markets, full access to American energy, and economic growth. They are also opposed to abortion and population control and have been critical of the climate alarmist movement.

Everything else in Heritage’s ideological toolbox puts them far from the anti-human, prosperity opposing, agenda of the groups funded by Colcom and Stanback. Heritage, like



Heritage, like most other standard-issue conservative institutions that oppose illegal immigration, does not do so by portraying humanity itself as a major world problem.

National Review and most other standard-issue conservative institutions that oppose illegal immigration, does not do so by portraying humanity itself as a major world problem.

The traditional libertarian movement provides a third perspective on immigration that is situated outside of both the conventional restrictionist and expansionist movements. The libertarians are expansionists, in that they support increased immigration and legalization of the undocumented migrants currently living and working in the United States without authorization.

But unlike left-wing expansionists that draw most of the attention on this issue, libertarians are not generally hostile to policing the border. They argue that a policy of admitting law-abiding migrants will make it easier to screen out the tiny few bad actors seeking illegal entry.

The most prominent examples of this position are the *Wall Street Journal's* otherwise conventionally conservative editorial page, an American business community that seeks a larger labor pool to draw from, and explicitly libertarian think tanks such as the Cato Institute, the Mercatus Center, and the Reason Foundation.

Cato is the flagship nonprofit on this front, producing research that demonstrates the need for increased immigration and calming the worst fears of the opposing perspective.

A February 2024 Cato analysis debunked one major border security concern:

Individuals on the [terrorism] watchlist who crossed the border illegally have never committed an attack domestically, let alone killed or injured anyone in such an attack. There is a chance that this could always happen, of course, but it's important to remember what we know.

An August 2023 Cato report addressed another criminal concern of the restrictionist side:

In 2022, U.S. citizens were 89 percent of convicted fentanyl drug traffickers—12 times greater than convictions of illegal immigrants for the same offense.

In 2023, 93 percent of fentanyl seizures occurred at legal crossing points or interior vehicle checkpoints, not on illegal migration routes, so U.S. citizens (who are subject to less scrutiny) when crossing legally are the best smugglers.

And a January 2024 Cato analysis refuted a crass political calculation regarding immigration policy that many in both major parties presume to be true:

In response to a question about restricting immigration, House Representative Yvette D. Clarke (D-NY) recently stated, “I need more people in my district just for redistricting purposes.”

...[A]n overwhelming 95 percent of the increase in the noncitizen population has been in GOP states from March 2019 to March 2023. Eliminating the growth in the noncitizen population from 2019 to 2023 would have cost Republican states 1.2 million people, or about two seats in Congress.

To the extent that criminal concerns on the border exist, the libertarians believe they are the result of an overly restrictive immigration policy that forces good people into the “illegal” line with bad people. The libertarians believe the presumption that every border crosser is a criminal makes it difficult to discern who has actual criminal intent.

According to this theory, if we screen out those with discernible criminal backgrounds at legitimate border crossings, but eagerly accept and swiftly admit anyone with the potential to fill a full-time job, then our front door will have a long but peaceful line filled with the people who have always become great Americans.

The back door—crossing illegally—would then be the scene of much less activity, easier to police, and rather than innocent women and children it would be almost exclusively a population of bad men with worse intentions.

Secure and (Mostly) Open Borders

In addition to enhancing border security, the libertarians argue that an open immigration policy for law-abiding, work-seeking aspirants is critical for the economic health of the United States.

Cato research from November 2023 revealed a “strong relationship between the number of job openings and border encounters, especially during the Trump and Biden administrations.” They reported that the larger number of job openings during the last few years has correlated with an equivalent spike in border incidents.

Most of the illegal crossings are people seeking jobs Americans need to fill but can’t find anyone to fill them. There is a lot more prosperity to be created in America, but we don’t have the people to do it.

That’s bad for the American economy in the short term and worse in the long term. In a September 2023 testimony to the U.S. Senate, a Cato researcher explained that the “ultimate resource” for Americans is a person with ambition who wants to join us:

Immigrants increase the supply of labor, which increases the supply of goods and services that people need; their consumption, entrepreneurship, and investment also increases the demand for labor, creating better-paying jobs for Americans elsewhere in the economy. Fundamentally, immigrants aren’t competitors. They are collaborators. Unfortunately, America’s immigration system fails to recognize this fact, leading to catastrophic consequences.

The most critical challenge facing the United States today is its declining population growth rate. The U.S. population is growing slower than at any point in its history. Moreover, in 2022, international migration accounted for 80 percent of the meager 0.4 percent population growth. Without immigration, the U.S. population will start to decline by the 2030s. Already in 2022, about half of all the counties in the United States saw declining populations.

Many surveys on the subject demonstrate that immigrants are disproportionately more likely to create businesses than native-born Americans. A May 2022 Massachusetts Institute of Technology study found immigrants 80 percent more likely to start a business and that the firms created provided more jobs on average than firms started by native-born citizens.

On the high edge of innovation, Nobel Prizes have been awarded to Americans 413 different times, nearly half of the total number of winners for all nations. This remarkable record is as much because of who we let in as who we are. A George Mason University report in 2022 found that 148 of the “American” Nobel laureates have been won by persons who were living in the United States at the time of the award, but not born in the United States.

And even that definition of an immigrant does not include examples such as Roger Y. Tsien (Nobel for Chemistry in 2008) who was born in New York City to Chinese immigrants, a native-born American. He is one of at least five Americans born to parents from mainland China that have won or shared Nobels.

Compare this to mainland China itself, the world’s most populated nation, which can claim a total of only eight winners.

It’s not possible to predict which immigrant dreams will come wildly true. In 1929, two young refugees from Russian tyranny had settled in New Jersey and had a son who was not destined to win a Nobel Prize. The father got intermittent work during the Great Depression as a cabinet maker. Perhaps some of the “natives” even accused him of taking their jobs. It was that sort of era.

At age 49 in the late 1970s, the son lost his own job. His name was Bernie Marcus, and that’s when he and some allies launched Home Depot. The enterprise has turned Marcus into one of the great job creators and philanthropists in American history.

American exceptionalism is a real thing, but we lie to ourselves if we believe this is because Americans are uniquely exceptional or that we know who will be. Our national superpower is a system built to entice anyone with a dream—any dream—to come here to try it out. The willingness to open our doors and let them do so is the driver of American greatness and exceptionalism.

Yes, it’s a messy policy issue. It always has been. It isn’t easy being exceptional.

But while no government policy could ever adjust for where the next great American or group of them will come from, a restrictive immigration policy is guaranteed to keep them out. That’s why the rest of the world became so unexceptional. ■



His name was Bernie Marcus, and that’s when he and some allies launched Home Depot. The enterprise has turned Marcus into one of the great job creators and philanthropists in American history.

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MAPPING SOROS'S
“PHILANTHROPY”
AT HOME AND ABROAD



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A NEW JIM CROW ERA

By Kali Fontanilla

I remember learning about the Jim Crow Era as a young black girl in 4th grade. Thinking about what it would have been like to attend a school with only other black children, even though I am mixed with a white mother, I would not have been allowed in some of her spaces. My mother's biracial relationship would have been thoroughly condemned and possibly dangerous for our family in the Jim Crow South.

My black father shared stories of being spit on as a young boy in Kentucky, something I never imagined experiencing until I studied abroad in Italy. There, an old Italian man spat in my face for being black, American, or both—I'm not sure which. Nevertheless, it was traumatizing, to say the least. When I came home from studying abroad, I felt grateful to live in America.

Surely, this type of blatant segregation from the Jim Crow Era will never make its way back to this country, where black people are noticed more for their skin color rather than their character, where spaces will be marked off for certain races, where people's prejudices about skin color trump human decency and equality? Let that history never repeat itself! Surely, we aren't going back to when standards will be lowered or raised depending on which shade in a crayon box your skin matches?

We have learned from our Jim Crow Era mistakes in the past, right? Or are we seeing a resurgence of a new type of segregation, not just in the South but permeating most public institutions, including our nation's public schools?

Blacks Only

"Would you like to advise the Black Girl Magic Club?" My coworker eagerly asked me at school one day after a long day of teaching 9th-grade English learners and low readers.

"What club?" I replied, more than a little surprised.

"I am starting the Black Girl Magic Club as a safe space for the black teen girls attending The Ranch." The Ranch was the nickname for the newly opened, state-of-the-art Rancho San Juan High School in my school district in Salinas, CA.



Credit: Google. License: <https://bit.ly/3RvW4bV>.

The Ranch was the nickname for the newly opened, state-of-the-art Rancho San Juan High School in my school district in Salinas, CA.

The school demographics were predominantly Hispanic, with a small percentage of African American students and an even smaller percentage of those students being girls. So the proposed Black Girl Magic Club would be maybe seven black girls, some of mixed-race. Meetings would only have black teacher-advisors. The coworker who asked me to join her also created Black Lives Matter lessons for all teachers to use in their homerooms, often complained about her coworkers' microaggressions, and was known for the large Obama poster in her classroom. Let's just say that our skin tone was one of the only things we had in common, but that was enough for her to ask me to advise the club with her as the only other black teacher on campus. I politely declined the invite.

Kali Fontanilla is a former public school teacher of 15 years. Her rebuttal statement to Proposition 16 in California helped to stop the push for legal reverse racism and a new extreme version of affirmative action in 2020. She is the co-founder of Exodus Institute, a K-12 online school with a nationally accredited program: Thinkexodus.org.



Exclusion of and special privileges for certain races is just fine, as long as it's white people who are excluded and minorities who are given special privileges.

This got me thinking. Would a *White Girl Magic Club* be allowed? White students were a minority in my school district. Middle school and high school students can be brutal to anyone different, and I witnessed my fair share of bullying of white students. But a White Girl Magic Club would certainly not be allowed. In fact, if a white teacher dared to propose the idea, they would face repercussions, perhaps national news coverage as well.

When I bring up objections to this type of separation and privileges based on color, the counterargument often goes something like this: “Whites were allowed to have their own spaces and privileges for two hundred years; it’s our turn now.” This is why, among progressives and leftists, the term *equality* is rejected in favor of *equity*. They want to force their vision of equity, or equal outcomes instead of equal opportunities, on society using what is often called *reverse racism*, or in other words, justifying racism against white people. To them, exclusion of certain races and special privileges for different races is just fine, as long as it’s white people who are excluded and minorities who are given special privileges.

This is why in 2020, during the aftermath of the George Floyd riots and the igniting of the Black Lives Matter movement across the nation, I received a gift facilitated by my district just for being a black teacher. A group of parents assembled gifts for the around two dozen black teachers in the district, including an “I love being black” sticker, a “black educators matter” mask, some honey body wash, a letter that greeted me with the “ancient African greeting” of “Hotep,” and a label that included a black power fist along with an outline of the continent of Africa.

My known black ancestors are from Jamaica and India. It was a ridiculous gift, to say the least—peak pandering. I wrote a letter to the school board in protest. In it, I stated that I would rather be honored as a teacher for my work in the classroom rather than my skin color. I also wrote about the divisive Ethnic Studies lessons that contained Critical Race Theory. Because of this, I was called “anti-people of color” by the board president. What a switch! From being honored with a special gift for black teachers to now being labeled as a racist!

I recently spoke to a 4th-grade teacher I know in the Fresno Unified School District (who would like to remain anonymous for obvious reasons). While she was in a district meeting, there was a special tribute to black educators, with the speaker wearing a “Thank you, Black Educators” shirt. The hilarious part of this story is that not a single black educator was in the room. She also told me that this year, in her district they are honoring all the black students with special certificates in a ceremony as part of the district’s Rise program. It was created to celebrate the accomplishments of African American students in the district.

My anonymous teacher stated that students who fail multiple subjects receive academic achievement rewards, and students with constant behavior problems receive citizenship rewards. No other race in her district has a special event like this. It is exclusively for the black students. Now reverse the races in your imagination, with special thank yous for white teachers and special awards for white students only, and then cast this story into the 1940s, and you see how easily this would fit into the Jim Crow South.

Modern Parallels

Some will object to my comparison of America’s current divisive and hyper-race-focused culture with that of the Deep South almost 100 years ago. But is the comparison that far off? Are not these the same principles today that were alive during the Jim Crow Era? Let’s do a comparison.

Jim Crow laws were a series of state and local statutes enacted in the South, starting in the late 19th century and continuing until the Civil Rights Act of 1968. These laws enforced the racial segregation of African Americans from whites, including public facilities such as schools, hospitals, libraries, and parks. They were often labeled with signs indicating “whites only” and “colored.” There are black people living today who experienced the Jim Crow



Jim Crow laws enforced the racial segregation of African Americans from whites, including public facilities such as schools, hospitals, libraries, and parks. They were often labeled with signs indicating “whites only” and “colored.”

Credit: Jim Crow Museum. License: <https://bit.ly/45Z1T57>.



It's just a reframing of the old Jim Crow Era, with the roles, races, and colors reversed.

South with tales of being kicked out of movie theaters and riding in the back of buses. It is a time in our nation's history that isn't looked upon with pride. But start thinking through what Jim Crow was and compare it to today, and you may be shocked to realize we are repeating the history of that era.

Now, don't misunderstand me. I'm not trying to say the situation today is exactly the same as the Jim Crow Era of the South in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, but all the same principles are at work today. If the seeds of racial segregation are allowed to blossom further, we are not far off from that time.

So-called progressives have resurrected all the elements of the Jim Crow Era. Special privileges and facilities for certain races, division by racial groups, harassment and browbeating of the new racial target (white people) embedded in government policy and school curriculum, rules applying to only one group and overlooked for others as a means to exclude, and so forth—not to mention these policies' cultural impact, especially on our impressionable youth. We may simply bemoan all these incidents by themselves as backward products of the modern woke movement, but once they are all listed together, the complete picture of this sad mosaic comes into focus. It's just a reframing of the old Jim Crow Era, with the roles, races, and colors reversed, like a film negative of an old 1920s picture.

In Elk Grove, California, a white teacher is suing his teachers union because he's not allowed to apply for a board position that is exclusively a "Black, Indigenous, people of color board (BIPOC) member seat." A black-owned venture capitalist firm tried to award grants exclusively to black women entrepreneurs but was blocked by an appellate court. In 2023, the National Educators Association (NEA) protested against the Supreme Court ending some race-based policies in school admissions. Ironically, this same Supreme Court now has a justice whose position was filled partly because of her skin color and gender, Ketanji Brown Jackson. Imagine if the races were reversed and a president declared he would only fill a SCOTUS seat with a white male. One can imagine President Wilson doing something like this, perhaps, during the Jim Crow Era.

Back then in the South, blacks were often assumed guilty until proven innocent. Today, the situation is usually reversed, like during the summer of 2020 when two white students of St Francis High School were expelled for the crime of a picture of them from 2017 resurfacing. It was assumed that the white students were wearing black face, but it turns out they were simply wearing acne masks that were black.

In the Jim Crow Era, racial prejudice and supremacy were baked into the school curriculum and often taught to students in classrooms. Nowadays, white students are being verbally abused by their teachers, like in the case of one father who sued because his son was told in class that he has "white privilege." He lost his case. White students are discriminated against, especially if they don't loudly celebrate the new Jim Crow policies of the left, like the student who sued his district after claiming he was discriminated against for wearing a MAGA hat. Among the claims, the student says he was repeatedly called "whitey" by school staff, the principal pulled his earphones out and mockingly asked if he was listening to "Dixie," and the student-council president made a meme of him wearing a KKK hood. The lawsuit was dismissed. Similar lawsuits are being filed nationwide, which only emphasizes the extent of the problem. How many examples of this discrimination have not been brought to court? The Denver Public Schools system is facing two federal civil rights investigations for discrimination against white students. We don't have time for all the examples that can be cited.

Segregated Schools

In the classroom, it is often the teachers unions behind such modern segregation efforts. For example, the NEA is complaining that some states are starting to close segregated spaces on college campuses. It's a sad fact that we have to fight the segregation battle all over again.

A 2001 National Center for Education Statistics analysis revealed that during the 1970s and early 1980s, black students saw significant improvements in academic achievement and high school completion rates, with the performance gap between black and white students narrowing considerably. However, by the 1990s, this progress had stalled, and achievement gaps across all grades and subjects began to widen again. Today, schools are more segregated than they were in the late 1960s.

For example, New Jersey's political leaders boast that they have one of the best public educational systems in the



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White students are discriminated against, especially if they don't loudly celebrate the new Jim Crow policies of the left, like the student who sued his district after claiming he was discriminated against for wearing a MAGA hat.

nation. This is true, frequently having national assessment scores and graduation rates that beat most states, but they also have a huge segregation problem. The reality is that most of their black and white students are in separate schools, with New Jersey having a school segregation rate that is three times the national average. No doubt, this segregation problem is fueled by the New Jersey Education Association, which had segregated spaces at their conference, including a NJEA Members of Color Diversity Brunch.

Most of our teachers unions have only contributed to a more color-focused society, encouraging their teachers to treat their students differently based on their race. They are pushing for equity policies that lower the standards for black and brown students and demonizing the vision of a colorblind society. In a recently produced “Racial Justice in Education” a resource guide created by the National Education Association (NEA), the case for racial preferences is made thus:

Being “colorblind” often serves as a pretense to downplay the significance of race, deny the existence of racism, and erase the experience of students of color. Be willing to lead the uncomfortable conversations and turn them into teachable moments. Learn to break through your discomfort to embrace the tensions and unknowns. When racism needs to be addressed but is being avoided, make it your job to initiate and facilitate a constructive conversation. Don't put the burden on students of color to have to bring things up or do all the heavy lifting to help white students learn.

What exactly are these uncomfortable conversations that they want teachers to lead with the goal of “teaching the white students”? It may be justified as fighting racism, but the result is division and hyper-race-focused classrooms and the uplifting of one group over another.

It should be noted also that the old Jim Crow Era had its share of justifications, as did slavery advocates. They argued even back then that their policies of racial segregation and supremacy were actually suitable for all parties and often pretended there was a threat from blacks that needed to be watched against, thus giving whites a victim mindset. I'm reminded of the proverb that there is no new thing under the sun, as the same rhetoric is used today.

A video included with the guide about “white supremacy culture” includes perfectionism and a sense of urgency as some of the traits. They are citing deadlines as an example of “white supremacy” culture. So, if a teacher requires their black students to turn in their papers on a specific date or make sure that their grammar is perfectly written, they are contributing to a white supremacist culture, according to the NEA.

The NEA has partnered with the non-profit Color of Change, which frequently launches popular campaigns “powerful enough to end practices that unfairly hold black people back and champion solutions that move us all forward.” Color of Change recently claimed victory for getting One America News removed from DirectTV. “This is another step towards making sure the media isn't allowed to amplify racist lies that lead to real-world violence against Black people.” Color of Change has another campaign to get all the major broadcasters to drop Fox News. Stating that “FOX is simultaneously shaping and being shaped by racist rhetoric that fuels white supremacist violence against Black people.” The group went on to blame Fox News for motivating the attacks on black churchgoers in Charleston, South Carolina, and black shoppers in Buffalo, New York. When



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Color of Change has another campaign to get all the major broadcasters to drop Fox News.

groups like Color of Change work closely with the teachers unions, it's no surprise that the unions then push for more racial segregation.

I wish I could offer big, bright solutions to this neo-racism we are seeing in today's schools, workplaces, media, government, and culture. But this isn't going to be an overnight fight. Like the past Civil Rights leaders, we need to be in it for the long game. First, there must be recognition of wrong. At least the Civil Rights leaders were able to get the national press on their side. When black Americans were being abused in the South, published pictures of people having their clothes stripped by hoses and being attacked by police dogs caused a backlash of public opinion. However, with the major news media often on board with the tactics of the Left, this strategy to shift public sympathies through news stories is no easy task.

Furthermore, when news does reach the ears of the masses, many have been effectively inoculated against potential outrage that would be the normal reaction to stories of racial

segregation and unfair treatment of different races by their politics. These practices are justified as good things among left-leaning people. Perhaps things need to get worse before they get better before they are shocking enough to wake people up. But when a group of black students forcing white kids to bow down to them doesn't spark national outrage and change in the minds of leftists, I'm not sure what will. In the end, the Jim Crow Era ended begrudgingly in the South, by force of law, as well as the shaming of that culture of racism in the eyes of the nation. Indeed, it will take no less than a similar effort to end the rise of the New Jim Crow we see today. Hopefully, we will not wait to rally our energies to meet this foe until things have devolved to the extent that it's as bad as it was back then. ■

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ON THE ELITES AND COUNTER-ELITES

By Michael Watson

“Let me tell you about the very rich. They are different from you and me.”—F. Scott Fitzgerald

Since even before the author of *The Great Gatsby* wrote that line in the mid-1920s, Americans have seen wealth, especially “old money,” as the dividing line between the “elites” and the “masses.” In recent decades, broad prosperity has driven much of the American middle class into financial positions formerly considered upper (at least lower-upper) class. But what if financial liquidity alone stopped being the defining feature of America’s elites? Increasingly, postgraduate education and proximity to cities of major cultural and economic influence define “elite” status more than even money does. And the new elites are just as “different from you and me” as Fitzgerald’s old-money rich. Survey research shows that these new elites are radical-to-extremist on certain social-liberal and environmental-left policies.

But there is also a new breed of “counter-elites,” ideologically conservative and formed by different institutions than the left-wing elites of the Upper West Side, Beverly Hills, the Presidio, and Chevy Chase. But the counter-elites can lose their own moorings and become “different from you and me” in their own ways. Whichever class of elites, and whichever political movement that class of elites dominates, holds closest to the view of “normal” held by an America that is changing will seize a critical advantage over its rival. Whichever succumbs to its misreading of the political history of California will yield a major advantage to its rivals.

The people who set the cultural and political tone in America are very, very weird. Not just “weird,” as in “unusual,” but “WEIRD”—Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and (small-d, in theory) Democratic.

Elite secularism and demographic pluralism are nearly uniquely post-Enlightenment European-American. The West was the first major region to devise secularism, exporting it internationally under the banner of Communism (a German invention) in many cases. Even places like China and Japan that may be nominally more irreligious than Europe or America are frequently more ethnically exclu-



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“Let me tell you about the very rich. They are different from you and me.”—F. Scott Fitzgerald.

sionary than the West, especially the elite circles that direct public policy in the West.

Elites are forged in at least post-secondary but often post-graduate educations. In recent decades they are educated in a small handful of highly selective private universities. These obviously include the Ivy League, but the Ancient Eight are joined by universities such as Stanford, the University of Chicago, Duke, and similar schools. Expanding the university universe further, highly selective and prestigious government-run colleges, like the University of California, Berkeley; the University of Virginia; the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; and the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor may be added to this group of elite-forming educational institutions.

Michael Watson is Capital Research Center’s research director and managing editor for InfluenceWatch.



Without mineral-extractive industries the laptops on which the would-be-elites of the laptop class work would not exist.

The “laptop class” that is the professional expression of the cultural and political elite—journalists, academics, and consultants, among other professions that could famously “work from home” during the COVID-19 lockdowns—relies on an industrialized society, even if other people (who are *not* elites, regardless of their incomes) actually *do* the industry. Without mineral-extractive industries, factories and factory labor, and international shipping, the laptops on which the would-be-elites of the laptop class work would not exist, to say nothing of the rest of their lifestyles.

A laptop class of elites doing “knowledge work” relies on a rich society to pay for these nontangible service goods. And the elites can become quite high-income, and high-income in large enough numbers to drive the political calculations of the Democratic Party. There is a reason why during his 2020 campaign President Joe Biden vowed to raise taxes on only households making over \$400,000 per year, well into the oft-maligned “One Percent”: Many of the lower six-figure-earning “elites” planned to vote for him.

How “Democratic” the elites are is up for debate. While they profess fealty to “Our Democracy,” one may honestly question the extent to which they are merely capital-D Democrats (or members of other countries’ parties of the high-status Left, like Canada’s Liberals, Britain’s Labour, France’s Renaissance, Italy’s Partito Democratico, or Germany’s Alliance 90/The Greens). What is clear is that the class of elites in America and the broader West could only have arisen from a small-d democratic society.

Back in 2016, Capital Research Center and political scientist Michael Barone looked at a selection of posh and highly educated locales—called “SuperZips” by social scientist Charles Murray—to see whether the elites who lived there were more right-wing or left-wing in their political donations. In what was (then) perhaps a surprise, their contributions were more left-wing, despite the regions’ wealth. In the four culturally and politically influential metropolitan areas of New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Washington, DC, the breakout was even more left-wing.

What does this mean for policy and politics, and what does it mean for culture? New survey data from Scott Rasmussen’s RMG Research commissioned by the Center to Unleash

Prosperity suggest the national elite are profoundly weird—and WEIRD—by the standards of the American population, with potentially major consequences for culture and politics. But the weird elites Rasmussen has surveyed win far less often in public policy than one might expect given their otherwise-hegemonic position. This suggests the existence of a counter-elite that can oppose the WEIRD-elite.

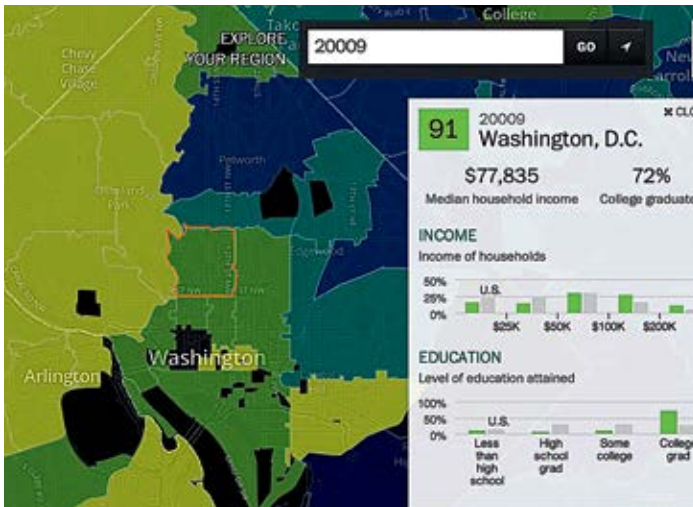
But in the background of American politics lies a mind virus deranging the WEIRD-elite and driving the counter-elite to self-sabotage. One can call it the “California Disease,” since it relies on a fundamental misreading of the history of capital-P Progressivism’s long-standing Golden State. (It has long been Big Labor’s Golden State as well, which is not a coincidence.) One set of elites believes that manipulating the dials of national demographics will turn the country into California, and the other set fears such a transformation. Both are wrong.

In a most unexpected development following the political rise of former President Donald Trump, the theory of an “Emerging Democratic Majority” built on ever-increasing proportions of Latinos and continued progressive dominance with other ethnic-minority groups has not only not come to pass but perhaps *even reversed*. The faction that adapts to a changing American “normality,” rather than pushing a permanent revolution or desperately scrambling to restore a lost idyll (that actually wasn’t), will gain the advantage.

And that adaptation may not look like one might expect, if past is prologue.

Polling the Elites

In late 2023, the Committee to Unleash Prosperity (CtUP) commissioned pollster Scott Rasmussen (now of RMG Research, not the eponymous polling and media company Rasmussen Reports, which he founded and since has departed) to investigate America’s elite class. The CtUP-commissioned polling defined the “American Elite” as individuals “having at least one postgraduate degree, earning at least \$150,000 annually, and living in high-population density areas (more than 10,000 people per square mile in their zip code).” In practice, the last criterion roughly corresponds to residence in dense urban areas around New York City; San Francisco; Boston; Miami; Chicago; Philadelphia; Washington, DC; and Providence, Rhode Island—all of which have population densities above 10,000 per square mile for their central cities—as well as some high-density areas of other metropolitan areas.



Credit: The Washington Post. License: <https://bit.ly/4eBVp12>.

As CRC argued when we conducted our survey of SuperZIP political giving back in 2016–2017, the “rich folks in the Big Four [culturally and politically influential cities of New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Washington, DC] make decisions that affect every American.”

These criteria are notable for a couple of reasons. First, the annual-income cutoff at \$150,000 is high but not *exceptionally* high. A household making that amount is outside the top 10 percent of U.S. households by household income, and in the metropolitan areas likely to satisfy the 10,000 people per square mile criterion that amount of money does not go *exceptionally* far because of the higher cost of living. Second, both postgraduate education and living in a major, dense urban city both select for Democratic allegiance by a wide margin. Of the core cities that meet the threshold, only Miami is in a state carried by Donald Trump in 2020. Except for Staten Island (Richmond County, New York), none of the cities are in a county carried by Trump in either 2016 or 2020. And only Miami has a Republican mayor. Even within red states, dense urban metropolises tend to be the most Democratic-aligned parts of the state, with the glaring exception of (again) Miami, Florida.

As a result, Scott Rasmussen and CtUP have surveyed a very specific population highly predisposed to hard progressivism. But this is still an important population, despite its relatively small size (approximately 1 percent of the population). As CRC argued when we conducted our survey of SuperZIP political giving back in 2016–2017, the “rich folks in the Big Four [culturally and politically influential cities of New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Washington, DC] make decisions that affect every American.”

So, what decisions might these elites make? Horrifying ones, if the CtUP polling is to be believed. The elites claimed to favor “the strict rationing of gas, meat, and electricity” in the name of fighting climate change by a margin of 77 percent to 22 percent, with the Ivy League/elite-private university educated subset favoring rationing by a margin of 89 to 10. For comparison, a representative sample of registered voters opposed such rationing 63 percent to 28 percent.

Similar margins of elites favor banning gas stoves (69 percent) and internal-combustion cars (72 percent), with smaller elite majorities favoring bans on sport-utility vehicles (58 percent), private air conditioning (53 percent), and non-essential air travel (55 percent). CtUP and Rasmussen note further, “More than two-thirds of the Ivy Elite school college grads would ban each of these. For the average American, less than one in four of these voters favor any of these bans.”

Now, when dealing with the highly problematic discipline of issue polling, it is possible that these respondents are not accurately reflecting their views. We have very good reason to believe that, in this case: Namely, the claimed political preferences of the elites explicitly contradict their actual lives.

In 2023, the Pew Research Center polled Americans on their international traveling habits, and classified the roughly one-fourth of Americans who had traveled to five or more countries as “globe-trotters.” While Pew did not stack the demographics into one omnibus classification like Scott Rasmussen and CtUP did, Pew found that 59 percent of postgraduate respondents qualified as “globe-trotters,” with only 4 percent having said they had never traveled outside the United States. Upper-income respondents were even more likely than postgraduates to qualify as “globe-trotters” than postgraduates, with over two-thirds claiming to have more than five countries on their list and only 3 percent having never left America. (There was less division by urban/suburban/rural residence, and interestingly no statistically significant division by political party.)

So either a fair number of America’s high-income, postgraduate-educated elites are enlisting as ratings on 100-gun ships of the line, or they are not telling the truth about either their travel habits or their preferences for restricting the means of travel. One also suspects precious few elites do not have air conditioning in their residences: According to the Energy Information Administration of the U.S. federal government, adoption of air conditioning in U.S. homes is almost universal at 88 percent. Maybe some of the San Franciscans and Seattleites do not, but that would come only because of their mild marine climate, which has reduced adoption of air



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Elites are forged in at least post-secondary but often postgraduate educations. In recent decades they are educated in a small handful of highly selective private universities.

conditioning in the Pacific Coast region; the New Yorkers, Washingtonians, and Miamians almost assuredly do.

Even if there is rampant preference falsification among the elite respondents to the CtUP polling, it is alarming that elites would even claim to hold these radical views as signaling. It suggests that the circles that elites are living in select for left-wing radicalism. This is gravely concerning given that CtUP-defined elites exert great influence over campaign contributions; the ideological alignment of Big Institutions like philanthropic foundations, labor unions, corporate HR departments, and media outlets; and the tone of political discussions in public forums. (CtUP's polling has found that the elites are more likely to discuss politics publicly than non-elites.)

What Makes an Elite?

The Committee to Unleash Prosperity polling leaves some questions unanswered. First, it defines elites by lumping together two strongly Democratic-leaning demographics: dense urbanites and the overeducated. It would be worthwhile to examine the independent effects that being a high-income dense urbanite and a high-income postgraduate have on one's political opinions relative to the national mean.

The third element CtUP used to define the elites, those with high incomes, is not as liberal as the other two. Indeed, the high-income voting bloc might not even be liberal at all. In 2022 exit polls of the national vote for the U.S. House of Representatives, voters self-reporting incomes above \$200,000 voted Republican 58 percent to 41 percent. This suggests the existence of a "counter-elite" that does not derive its standing from living in a major, mid-night-blue-except-for-Miami city and from indoctrination

by overexposure to the university system, but rather from capitalist economic success. Think of car dealers, franchise-business owners, contractors, and similar occupations.

There are substantial policy implications from this. If income does not make an "elite" a nutty WEIRD leftist, but urban status and overeducation do, then endorsing left-wing, supposedly "working-class" economic policy like sectoral labor bargaining or vast increases in central planning to create make-work jobs like Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal all over again would not only be *bad policy*, it would also be *bad politics* for conservatives derived from a failure to understand who the Grill Dad Republican actually is.

Consider the possibility that the major ideological and elite-masses fault line is not, as it was for F. Scott Fitzgerald, old wealth or high income, but rather *status-income disequilibrium*. If the exit polling is correct, Republicans and conservatives typically have more money than their liberal and Democratic counterparts, but if the CtUP polling reflects a meaningful elite, they have less status.

For a thought-experiment model of this, think of the 2020 boat parades supporting then-President Donald Trump's campaign. Owning a boat or boat-share is not cheap, and the press mocked the Republican rallies at the time. Meanwhile Democrats and liberals appear to have more status than money, as exemplified by the journalists who did the mocking. (Journalists have an average annual salary of \$57,500 per year according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.)

If WEIRD leftism is generated not by money but by the status-generating institutions of American life, this creates a problem for the Right. To obtain public office, positions in government bureaucracy, positions in business, or cultural influence, a person needs at least some status. So where can one obtain the status necessary to rise through the "ranks" of American life without turning into a leftist?

Regional business—franchised business ownership, contracting, real estate, car dealerships, professional agriculture, and so forth—can at least provide a right-of-center-inclined person with financial resources. The military has historically granted status to right-leaning people. "Little law" (regional-level lawyering as opposed to white-shoe firms and Big Corporate lawyering) and medicine have also been historical paths to status among right-leaning individuals. It should not be surprising that Republican U.S. Representatives, who may be taken as a sampling of "counter-elites," tend to have backgrounds in regional business, the military, non-elite law, or medicine.

But these pathways are changing, in ways that illustrate how left-progressives have committed to controlling sta-



The people who set the cultural and political tone in America are “WEIRD”—Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and (small-d, in theory) Democratic.

tus-granting institutions. Medicine is starting to freeze out conservatives by two methods: The first is economic; the second social. Doctors are increasingly employees of large medical conglomerates, not owners of their own practices. In this way, they are increasingly managed like the historically left-wing white-collar professions of classroom teaching and journalism, including being subject to compulsory unionization.

Social control enters the medical profession through the increasing radical-left political coordination of medical education, the bleeding edges of which have been reported on by outlets such as the *Washington Free Beacon*. In late 2022, the right-leaning outlet reported on a report from the Association of American Medical Colleges:

Forty-four percent of medical schools have tenure and promotion policies that reward scholarship on “diversity, inclusion, and equity.” Seventy percent make students take a course on “diversity, inclusion, or cultural competence.” And 79 percent require that all hiring committees receive “unconscious bias” training or include “equity advisors”—people whose job it is to ensure diversity among the faculty.

At the ground level, the *Free Beacon* has reported extensively on the mandatory “Structural Racism and Health Equity” course at UCLA, which compelled future doctors to read essays that were written by a “fat liberationist” and that expound “‘anti-capitalist politics’ as a principle of ‘disability justice.’” It also compelled future doctors to attend a lecture by a radical-left activist who called for “Free Palestine,” denounced the supposed colonization of “Turtle Island” (a radical-leftist term for the supposedly “occupied” United States), and offered “non-secular prayer” to “mama earth.”

The effect of such required coursework is to create a hostile environment for prospective physicians who are not on the radical left. One must interrogate the possibility that creating that hostile environment is such a requirement’s intention. Should one or two nonradicals hold their tongues

and slip through such political education to an M.D. unmo-
lested, the unionization of their corporate medical practice
will keep them funding and under the “political education”
of the institutional Left.

Any postgraduate track to counter-elite status, not just
medical education, will be threatened by open ideological
gatekeeping in higher education. This comes in the form
of compulsory unionization of graduate students, DEI
(diversity, equity, and inclusion) application statements,
identity-related courses required for graduation, and
requirements for public DEI pledges—all of which serve to
promote ideological coordination under the left-wing elite.

So where will right-leaning elites come from? The Right will
always have local and regional businesspeople, unless the
Right foolishly drives them away deliberately. (For evidence
of this, see the political giving of the National Federation of
Independent Business, which is and has been overwhelm-
ingly Republican.) Likewise, labor union officials are almost
certain to remain partisans of Everything Leftism, regardless
of the Right’s approach to labor relations.

Explicitly conservative institutions will try to form coun-
ter-elites. The most prominent example is likely House
Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA), a lawyer and alumnus of
the social-conservative public interest law firm Alliance
Defending Freedom. This is necessary and important,
but there are risks in investing too deeply into explicit
counter-institutions as the sole pipeline for counter-elite
formation. The chief risk is the right-wing species of
“California Disease,” an affliction widespread among polit-
ical elites that promotes a false idea of how demographic
change changed the Golden State, and how future, similar
changes could change American politics.

The Elites and California Disease

Before addressing what California Disease is and how it
afflicts politicians, one must riff from Dickens. California *was*
progressive to begin with. There must be no doubt, whatever,
about that. The Republicans were Hiram Johnson, Earl
Warren, and Arnold Schwarzenegger; the Democrats were
Pat and Jerry Brown and Gavin Newsom. The GOP has
not held the “trifecta” in the state since the 1960s, and the
trifecta, not presidential voting habits, tells best the truth of
a state’s politics.

But because of the outsize influence of the Golden State on
American culture and the outsize influence of the presi-
dency—especially the presidency of conservative Californian
Ronald Reagan—on national politics, many think the
Golden State was once conservative in some lost idyll.



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The Republicans were Hiram Johnson, Earl Warren, and Arnold Schwarzenegger (shown); the Democrats were Pat and Jerry Brown and Gavin Newsom. The GOP has not held the “trifecta” in California since the 1960s, and the trifecta, not presidential voting habits, tells best the truth of a state’s politics.

And since it is not conservative today, then the idyll was lost and had to have been lost by someone’s actions. Both liberals and conservatives have a common answer: They claim the state was Ground Zero for *The Emerging Democratic Majority*, on steroids. For liberals, the Demographics ended the Reagan nightmare. For conservatives, the Demographics lost the Reagan Idyll. For both, what the Demographics did to Golden State, they can do to the nation—for good or ill, depending on one’s perspective.

For elites of both factions, this assumption yields a deranging condition one might call “California Disease.” The left-wing variant of California Disease is, loosely, “Tomorrow Belongs to Me” (implications of the *Cabaret* number by that title left to the reader). All that it takes to secure Everything Leftism is to turn the demographic dials far enough. One-party national rule is inevitable, just like one-party rule in once-red, now midnight-blue California. Furthermore, there is no risk of “going too far” in pursuit of Everything Leftism because the Demographics only move, and vote, in one direction. This is *The Emerging Democratic Majority* interpreted as teleology, the extreme applications of which drove one of the book’s authors, Ruy Teixeira, out of institutional liberalism at the Center for American Progress and into the arms of the heterodox center-right at the American Enterprise Institute.



The left-wing variant of California Disease is, loosely, “Tomorrow Belongs to Me.”

The conservative California Disease is the reverse: a paralyzing, all-conquering fear of the Demographics and their manipulation by the California Diseased progressives. Like its left-wing counterpart, right-wing California Disease takes the *Emerging Democratic Majority* as teleology, holding that changing Demographics are an existential threat to conservative politics and power. Applied to politics and policy, right-wing California Disease subjugates all political priorities to extreme immigration restriction, anti-mainstream-female sentiment, and (in extremis) explicit white-identity politics. Where left-wing California Disease afflicts its sufferers with hubris, right-wing California Disease afflicts its sufferers with *desperation*—the need for “one weird trick” to rescue America from the Californian future the Demographics are supposed to bring about.

Counter-elites formed by right-wing institutions are at severe risk from California Disease, in part because right-wing counter-institutions tend to locate in blue states, often the bluest regions that qualify for the Scott Rasmussen/Committee to Unleash Prosperity classification of elite locales. The “New Right” flagship think tank, the Claremont Institute, is headquartered in Upland, California, a suburb of Los Angeles with about half the density required to qualify as “elite.” Other think tanks like the Heritage Foundation (and the Capital Research Center) are headquartered in Washington, DC, which meets the CtUP “elite” density qualification and is monolithically Democratic in its local government. Prominent media outlets (like Fox News) and prestige magazines (like *National Review*) are based in and around New York City, another overwhelmingly liberal “elite” city.

Historically, conservative institutional proximity to leftists led to a conservative-Republican elite class that was more explicitly moderate, in the mold of longtime New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller or House Minority Leader Bob Michel (R-IL), than was the conservative electorate. But today, thanks to ideological sorting, it means that intellectual conservative elites have likely risen through educational systems either institutionally hostile to conservatism or institutionally dedicated to conservatism (like Hillsdale College) and who live in regions institutionally hostile to conservatism.

Combined with exposure to internet commentary, this upbringing can create a hard-edged, almost anti-social tendency among conservative operatives and institutions. California Disease, the view that “the Demographics are coming for us,” is a common affliction, leading to ideologically extreme and politically harmful policy proposals both serious and tongue-in-cheek ranging from “Repeal the 19th [Amendment]” to throwing out the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Whither the Counter-Elite?

If a Left afflicted with California Disease risks overreach that hands Republicans improbable victories (the 2016 Presidential election being the paradigmatic example), a Right afflicted with California Disease risks alienating the “normal center.” The pseudonymous internet personality “Edmund Smirk” defines “Swiftian Normality” (after the recording artist Taylor Swift, whom he claims exemplifies the concept) as follows:

Swiftian Normality is an elusive, vibes-based idea; however, it can be roughly defined as inoffensive, law-abiding, upwardly-mobile, middle-class culture. Just imagine everything that makes the American Dream possible, and exactly what the nouveau régime—which worships at the altars of “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion”—wants to destroy.

The real-world Swift, to the extent her politics are known, appears to be an ordinary but not particularly involved Democrat, based on her occasional political endorsements (most notably of unsuccessful 2018 Democratic candidate for U.S. Senate Phil Bredesen of Tennessee). But the “normal center” to which one might apply the “inoffensive, law-abiding, upwardly-mobile, middle-class culture” tag should not be lost to conservatives.

But the “normal center” *will be lost* if conservative elites indulge California Disease. Likewise, the “normal center” will not necessarily be *gained* if conservative elites indulge the other blue-state error, me-too-ism of whatever species, be it the older social-liberal-fiscal-conservative-ish-but-not-really Rockefeller Republicanism or the “New Right” social-conservative-fiscal-progressivism models endorsed by the “postliberal” movement or American Compass, the “conservative” think tank funded by institutional progressivism.

Overcoming California Disease and securing the “normal center” will require conservative elites and policymakers, and the institutions that form them, to devise approaches that deal with the world as it is. Smarter, more effective conservative policymakers and activists such as Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, Manhattan Institute activist Chris Rufo, or American Federation for Children activist Corey DeAngelis do not retreat to radical, despaired argumentation *even when pursuing issues of concern to those who might otherwise be inclined to Demographics-related despair, like restricting the teaching of critical race theory or promoting border control*. Notably, DeSantis’s abortive presidential effort was hamstrung by messaging that was arguably more despairing than the messaging of his Florida government.

And that raises an unlikely figure who threatens both forms of California Disease. Former President Donald Trump is a unique figure, but one thing is clear: The political coalitions of his first two presidential elections were not affirmations of the “Demographics are destiny” thesis underpinning California Disease. Confident predictions by liberals and centrists from 2016 that Trump would become a Barry Goldwater-style demon-figure tying Latinos to the Democrats by overwhelming margins and further deepening the alliance between Democrats and Black Americans were explicitly refuted by the 2020 election returns.

Even in defeat, President Trump had swung majority-Latino Miami-Dade County from an overwhelming defeat to a single-digit margin, helping him expand on his 2016 margin in the state. He swung the Rio Grande Valley, a Democratic bastion in Texas, into two-party competition. As he campaigns for his old job, polls—which may be wrong *in either direction*—consistently suggest Trump may be making inroads with Black voters, especially men. While he will not win them outright, younger African Americans may not prove as loyal to the Party of Obama as their parents and grandparents.

Events are further scrambling the Demographics. For how long can American Jews and Muslim immigrants live comfortably under the same political roof, especially when Israel’s conflicts with Iran-backed militant factions are high in public salience? Even if American Jews don’t politically defect anytime soon, their influence within elite-formation institutions threatens the power of DEI bureaucracies, which would be a boon to conservative counter-elite formation. Interest rate hikes have made left-wing ideological signaling in business more costly, hurting ESG (environmental, social, and governance) movements and that wing of left-wing elite politics. Even turning the “demographic dials” by border nonenforcement (or explicitly encouraging illegal immigration) risks backlash from the Demographics themselves, as the shock arrival of two-party competition to the Rio Grande Valley in 2020 and beyond illustrates.

Conservatives could still blow it if they indulge the impulse to despair. The lesson of what we are forced to call the “Trump era” is that nothing is determined and everything is up for grabs.

Whichever elite class resists the temptation of California Disease is going to have a big advantage in claiming the future. ■

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HAYDEN LUDWIG**



RISE OF THE ECO-RIGHT

A few dozen lobbying, litigation, and activist nonprofits that identify themselves as free market or broadly right-of-center are attempting to rebrand environmentalism and global warming ideology as conservative values. The Capital Research Center broke the news that these “eco-Right” groups also are secretly bankrolled by liberal mega-donors.



CAPITAL RESEARCH CENTER
AMERICA'S INVESTIGATIVE THINK TANK



EXTREME ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS' INFLUENCE OVER THE INTERIOR DEPARTMENT

By Scott Walter

Summary: On April 30, 2024, CRC president Scott Walter testified before the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the House Committee on Natural Resources. In his testimony, Walter detailed how radical environmentalists with extreme views are exercising considerable sway over the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Chairman Gosar, Vice Chairman Collins, distinguished members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the honor of testifying. I'm president of the Capital Research Center, where for decades we have studied nonprofits and extremist groups.

I applaud the full Natural Resources Committee and this subcommittee for your attention to threats posed by environmental extremists and special interest groups attempting to influence the Department of the Interior—matters that do not receive nearly as much attention as they deserve from Congress and the media.

As we meet, radical extremists are showing their contempt for the rule of law and for common decency on college campuses in this city and across the country, harassing Jewish students and defending terrorist attacks. Where left-wing radicals are concerned, a group may be best known for its stand on a non-environmental issue, but the same group is likely to espouse extreme environmental views, too. Take Code Pink, for example, a group best known for zealotry related to foreign policy, including a history of hatred of Israel: some years ago one of its national directors claimed “Israel is a terror state” and its existence is a “war crime.”¹ In just the last two weeks Code Pink protestors defending Hamas shut down San Francisco’s Golden Gate Bridge to demand “Palestinian liberation” and disrupted the White House Correspondents



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When speaking of Palestine, Code Pink uses the language of indigenous people; for instance, “CODEPINK recognizes Palestinians as the rightful owners and caretakers of Palestine, their indigenous homeland.”

Dinner.² When speaking of Palestine, Code Pink uses the language of indigenous people; for instance, “CODEPINK recognizes Palestinians as the rightful owners and caretakers of Palestine, their indigenous homeland.”³

But like most extremist groups Code Pink also includes radical environmentalism in its campaigns to manipulate federal departments, including Interior. Code Pink joined others to harass Rep. Nancy Pelosi at her office, demanding she pass the so-called Green New Deal.⁴ It has celebrated the blocking of pipelines near Indian lands,⁵ and in many other ways has made clear it sees all these radical causes as inseparable.

Under the current Administration, another radical group, Pueblo Action Alliance (PAA), wages the best-known

Scott Walter is president of Capital Research Center.



Code Pink joined others to harass Rep. Nancy Pelosi at her office, demanding she pass the so-called Green New Deal.

extremist campaign to influence the Interior Department. Like Code Pink, PAA seamlessly connects radical environmental views with radical foreign policy views and shows a fondness for revolutionary violence—all obvious just from the front page of PAA’s website. That landing page currently shows a PAA flyer for the COP28 climate conference that includes radical environmentalism (denouncing carbon capture, hydrogen, water and nuclear power; demanding a complete phase-out of fossil fuels), radical feminism (calling for “feminist regenerative economies”), and radical anti-Israel policies (“solidarity with our Palestine relatives”).⁶ The page’s very first words exhort: “The Pueblo Revolt Never Ended: 1680 to Infinity,” a reference to the uprising of Pueblo people against Spanish colonizers in A.D. 1680, which brought the death of hundreds of Spaniards.⁷ I do not defend the Spanish who mistreated Pueblo people in past centuries, but to act as if present-day Pueblo people are enduring similar horrors and to also suggest that murderous uprisings should continue unto “Infinity” bespeaks a dangerous radicalism that Americans across the political spectrum do not want influencing any part of the federal government.

Radicalism’s affinity for violence is also seen in the way PAA media organizer Somah Haaland posted to Instagram photos of protests that turned violent at the Interior Department. Haaland wrote, “What an honor it was to march with my Pueblo kin last week for #Peoplesfossilfuels week of action.” The reference was to October 2021 protests that, as one media report put it, “culminated in outbreaks of violence and arrests at the Department of the Interior that were ‘reminiscent of January 6th.’” Dozens of radicals were arrested, and “at least one officer was hospitalized.”⁸

PAA’s vision is written in the kind of “woke” vocabulary found in Columbia classrooms whose poorly educated students now terrorize their Jewish peers on campus. PAA feverishly promises “to dismantle and eradicate white supremacy, capitalism, imperialism, hetero-patriarchy and extractive colonialism. Rematriation of everything stolen.”⁹ Similarly, PAA issued a joint statement on the death of George Floyd with the All-African People’s Revolutionary Party – New Mexico that declared,

The institution of policing in the United States was created to control, criminalize, and brutalize African and Indigenous peoples on stolen land. Modern Amerikkkan police descend directly from slave patrols and settler militias formed in the 18th and 19th centuries. In the present day, their ranks are riddled with outright fascists and white supremacists. Police and armed US state agents like those of ICE, the DEA, the FBI, DHS, and the US military are working today as they’ve always been designed to—as tools of racist settler-colonial capitalist and imperialist violence, hand in hand with white vigilante terrorists.¹⁰



License: Public domain.

The House Committee on Natural Resources has pointed out, in letters to Secretary Deb Haaland, that she and her department not only treat the Pueblo Action Alliance as a source of policy wisdom but have also created at least the appearance of bias in official decisions and improper assistance to PAA.

It is easy to see how anyone indoctrinated with this hysterical ideology could turn violent, and in that vein, PAA's allies in the All-African People's Revolutionary Party proudly seek "the total liberation and unification of Africa under Scientific Socialism."¹¹ The Party pays homage to its founder, Kwame Nkrumah, the dictator of Ghana who received the Lenin Peace Prize from the Soviet Union.¹²

The PAA is also aligned with another Communist dictatorship through its alliance with Cuba's Venceremos Brigades. Its website includes an essay by PAA's "creative strategist" that glamorizes Cuban tyranny. The strategist explains that when he returned to this country from Cuba, he "experienced reverse culture shock returning to an environment with such a prominent white supremacist ideology."¹³ By contrast, Freedom House rates Cuba as "Not Free" and reports, "Cuba's one-party communist state outlaws political pluralism, bans independent media, suppresses dissent, and severely restricts basic civil liberties."¹⁴

Most Americans would likely assume that a group as radical as Pueblo Action Alliance would not be taken seriously by the Department of the Interior, but alas, the respect shown by the Department for these extremists has become notorious. This Committee has pointed out, in letters to the Secretary, that she and her department not only treat PAA as a source of policy wisdom but have also created at least the appearance of bias in official decisions and improper assistance to PAA.¹⁵

The letters document multiple meetings between the Secretary and PAA officials. The Secretary has promoted PAA by having its insignia appear in public photographs beginning from her first day in office. PAA has promoted itself by such means as posting these photographs on its Instagram account.¹⁶ Activists have promoted Secretary Deb Haaland's involvement¹⁷ in a film produced by the Director of PAA which demands that oil, gas, and mineral leasing outside of the Chaco Culture National Historical Park be ended—a question on which the Secretary officially ruled in favor of PAA's demand. And finally there are the many ways that the Secretary appears to be influenced by her adult child, Somah Haaland, who is employed by PAA. No wonder the Committee is deeply concerned that PAA may have improperly received nonpublic information from the Department.

Let there be no claims that such policy decisions as the withdrawal of leasing outside Chaco Park indicates respect for indigenous peoples. In this case as in others, a ruling sought by one tribe is strenuously opposed by another tribe.

The Navajo Nation voted to reject the Secretary's policy for the understandable reason that it expects her decision to cost the tribe hundreds of millions of dollars.¹⁸ The Navajos offered a compromise on this policy but were ignored by the Department, which failed to consult with a tribe that was powerfully affected by the policy. The result? According to the Standing Committee of the 25th Navajo Nation Council, their tribe members "will be pushed into greater poverty."¹⁹

In response to this injustice, Kathleen Sgamma, head of a trade group for small independent producers, objected that Somah Haaland has "aggressively lobbied DOI and Congress to advance the Chaco withdrawal." Sgamma added, "Can you imagine if President Trump's Interior Secretary David Bernhardt had a son who lobbied him on behalf of Western Energy Alliance to increase leasing around Chaco? It would have been unacceptable and rightfully criticized. Secretary Haaland's situation is no different and probably worse since over 5,000 Navajos stand to lose millions of dollars in income every year if the withdrawal is approved."²⁰

"Dark Money" Used to Influence the Department

With that reference to former Interior Secretary Bernhardt we come to another aspect of environmental extremism's influence on the Department. Mr. Bernhardt became Secretary after environmental activists had first hounded his predecessor Ryan Zinke from the office. The same activists then hounded Bernhardt through the end of the previous Administration. Those activists are part of the largest network of "dark money" on either side of the political spectrum; namely, the network operated by Arabella Advisors, and they have taken precious little interest in this Administration's dubious conflicts of interest and other ethics challenges.

The Arabella network's scheme is to create and manage multiple "umbrella" nonprofits which in turn pop up hundreds of fake grassroots groups for all sorts of political purposes. In this case, two of Arabella's nonprofits created a matching pair of fake groups known as Western Values Project and Western Values Project Action in 2013.²¹ Those groups in turn spent years attacking first Zinke, then Bernhardt, in hopes of influencing Interior policy and paving the way for their radical allies such as Secretary Haaland.²²



Credit: WildEarth Guardians. License: <https://bit.ly/45JQEd>.

The Navajo Nation voted to reject the Secretary Haaland’s policy for the understandable reason that it expects her decision to cost the tribe hundreds of millions of dollars.

Although the fake groups’ websites tried to imply they were launched in Helena, Montana, and operated by “folks who live in the Rocky Mountain West,”²³ in fact the groups were operated out of two of Arabella’s “Beltway bandit” shops, the New Venture Fund and the 1630 Fund in Washington, DC. They were staffed by Democratic and union operatives, such as Chris Saeger, a former staffer of the Montana Democratic Party and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), and two more Montana Democratic staffers, Jayson O’Neill and Yetta Stein. The advisory board included a Colorado Democratic staffer, Kjersten Forseth, who was also a former AFL-CIO political director. Another advisory board member was Caroline Ciccone, who in 2019 ran another New Venture Fund fake group, Restore Public Trust, which attacked the Trump Administration. Ciccone, a former communications director of the Democratic National Committee, previously led Americans United for Change, a left-wing agitation group whose national field director, Scott Foval, was recorded in 2016 by undercover journalists bragging that the group had paid mentally ill and homeless people to instigate violence at Trump campaign rallies. Within days, Foval was fired.²⁴

Another advisory board member was Kyle Herrig, who had been on the board of Arabella’s New Venture Fund as well as the advisory board of at least five other Arabella fake groups,

including Ciccone’s Restore Public Trust. Herrig came to Arabella from one of its largest and most sinister donors, the foreign national billionaire Hansjörg Wyss.²⁵ Because he lacks U.S. citizenship or even a green card, Mr. Wyss is supposed to stay out of U.S. politics, but in years past he contributed over \$100,000 in illegal direct political contributions to such Members of Congress as Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL), former Rep. Jay Inslee (D-WA), and former Rep. Mark Udall (D-CO). Unfortunately, the illicit donations were not discovered until after the statute of limitations on the crime had expired, though the contributions are still visible in the Federal Election Commission’s database.²⁶

In more recent years, Wyss has contributed roughly half a billion dollars to nonprofits active in politics and public policy, as documented by the watchdog group Americans for Public Trust.²⁷ A quarter-billion of those dollars went over the last two decades into the Arabella network, which launched the Western Values Project nonprofits and other attack groups aimed at the previous Administration. Wyss’s deeply disturbing interventions in American politics through his multibillion-dollar Wyss Foundation and its connected “dark money” 501(c)(4) Berger Action Fund were the subject of an oversight hearing in the House Ways and Means Committee, exercising its supervision of the nonprofit sector, at which I was honored to testify last December.²⁸



In more recent years, Wyss has contributed roughly half a billion dollars to nonprofits active in politics and public policy, as documented by the watchdog group Americans for Public Trust.

In 2020, the two Western Values Project nonprofits linked to Herrig, plus Restore Public Trust linked to Ciccone and two more Arabella fake groups (American Oversight, a judicial activist and litigation group, and Allied Progress, which attacked Republican cabinet officials) announced they were being rolled into one new organization: Accountable.US, *itself* a former Arabella fake group later established as an independent nonprofit headed by Herrig and Ciccone. I note that Accountable.US also engages in such work as releasing an oppo research dump on me and other witnesses ahead of our testimony at a recent House Administration Committee hearing.²⁹ Apparently Arabella's children do not appreciate having the curtain pulled back on this massive Wizard of Oz-style operation that takes in billions of dollars every election cycle.³⁰

Before leaving the enormous influence exerted by the Arabella network on the Interior Department across entire Administrations, and the network's deep-rooted connections to Hansjörg Wyss, I should add that Arabella's founder, Eric Kessler, was radicalized by an environmental extrem-

ist, and that Mr. Wyss's private foundation and his "dark money" group are run by a woman, Molly McUsic, who likely first met Mr. Kessler before he launched Arabella, when both of them were working at the Department of the Interior under Bruce Babbitt, the former head of the League of Conservation Voters (LCV), where Kessler previously worked.

The founder of the League of Conservation Voters, David Brower, says he established it "initially as part of Friends of the Earth," which he also founded, but the two groups "later separated for legal reasons (corporations are not supposed to contribute to political candidates)."³¹ Brower earlier ran the Sierra Club, but he so radicalized and politicized the group that it lost its 501(c)(3) charitable status.³² Brower also radicalized the undergraduate Kessler in 1990, when Brower gave a speech at Kessler's Colorado university. Kessler hitchhiked after Brower to San Francisco to work with him.

It's unclear whether Kessler realized just how radical Brower was. In a 1977 Friends of the Earth manifesto overseen by Brower, the environmental apocalypse predicted was not then global warming but the "population bomb." (Note that the religious fanaticism of radicals seems to require the preaching of a secular apocalypse, though as the various predictions of doom fail to come true, new apocalypses must be manufactured.)

That 1977 manifesto's first chapter deals with the alleged threat of population, and it calmly ponders horrific public policies to "save" the world from people:

Perhaps someday childbearing will be deemed a punishable crime against society unless the parents hold a government license. Or perhaps all potential parents will be required to use contraceptive chemicals, the governments issuing antidotes to citizens chosen for childbearing.³³

I do not know if Arabella's Kessler was aware of this depraved view of alleged environmental dangers, nor if Secretary Haaland, as she earned a lifetime score of 98 percent from the League of Conservation voters for her service in Congress,³⁴ was aware of the extremism that gave birth to the League. But I do know it should be a warning to anyone with oversight over the Department she now runs, and to



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David Brower (not shown) also radicalized the undergraduate Eric Kessler in 1990, when Brower gave a speech at Kessler's Colorado university. Kessler hitchhiked after Brower to San Francisco to work with him.

the Secretary herself: Radical environmentalism can blind its acolytes to reality and lead to gruesomely anti-human conclusions, rendering such radicalism entirely unfit as a basis for public policy.

Even on the more mundane level of “dark money” influencing the Interior Department, note that the Center for Public Integrity has warned that the League of Conservation Voters has become a “‘dark money’ heavyweight,”³⁵ using its cash to influence the Administration and thwart the desires for abundant minerals and inexpensive energy felt by most Americans.

Another example of the combination of “dark money” and environmental extremism comes from the Wilderness Society, which regularly works to influence the Interior Department. The Society’s sister group, the Wilderness Society’s Action Fund, reveals its crude partisanship by donating only to Democratic candidates.³⁶ The Society itself has not one but two Wyss-world leaders on its governing council: the aforementioned Molly McUsic, leader of the Wyss Foundation and its Berger Action Fund “dark money” group, and Hansjörg Wyss himself.³⁷ McUsic serves as a

vice-chair of the Society’s governing council. Evidence of the Society’s influence in the Interior Department appears in such instances as the December 2, 2022, meeting with Deputy Secretary Beaudreau to discuss Izembek National Wildlife Refuge policy,³⁸ which three months later led to a complete victory for the Society.³⁹

Clearly, radical environmentalists with extreme views are exercising considerable sway over the Department of the Interior. I hope this serious problem will be addressed. Americans, especially the poor, deserve to enjoy the benefits of inexpensive energy and abundant resources, with which our nation has been blessed. You should protect the country from radicals who attempt to push on the levers of government to eliminate energy sources and to prevent the mining of the very natural resources required to produce their preferred sources of energy and transportation.

Thank you.

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

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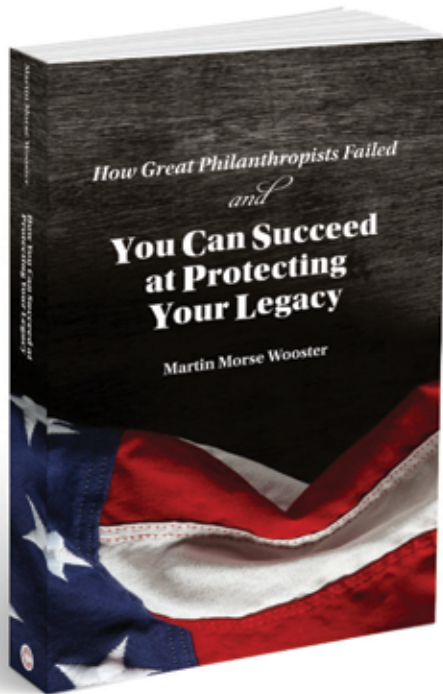
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