



NeverTrump Groups Profit from Left-Wing Philanthropist's Cash

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Just in time for the holidays, a group of philanthropic leaders released a joint statement urging Americans to support what they view as one the country's most urgent needs: The need to protect Special Counsel Robert Mueller.

“In the United States of America, the rule of law is paramount,” they write. “No one is above the law, including the president, his family, and others who serve in his administration. The special counsel's investigation must be allowed to continue unimpeded. “

The letter campaign was organized by Democracy Fund, a Washington, D.C.-based foundation. Its wealthy benefactor is Pierre Omidyar, an Iranian-born billionaire and co-founder of eBay. Omidyar and his wife have a net worth of around \$10 billion, and they've pledged to donate most of that fortune to charity. They fund an extensive network of nonprofits, programs and foundations around the world that underwrite everything from early education projects in Central America to microloans in Africa.

One of Omidyar's charity cases closer to home is the NeverTrump movement, a loose collection of disgruntled “conservatives” and Republicans now partnering with the Left to destroy Donald Trump's presidency, his family, and anyone else in the president's orbit. Omidyar donated \$250,000 to a NeverTrump political action committee in 2016. He remains a powerful foe of the president and—like everyone on the Left—inexplicably views Trump's reign as a dire threat not just to American democracy but to the entire world.

Omidyar is a former donor to the Democratic Party and a devoted Leftist whose main causes include promoting open borders, climate change, and racial politics. But his latest crusade, funded to the tune of \$100 million, is to infect every corner and crevice of the public square with anti-Trump bias.

“Over the past two years, I have seen alarming and sometimes unprecedented violations of our country's democratic norms,” Joe Goldman, Democracy Fund's president, wrote last summer. “At Democracy Fund, we firmly believe these threats demand a full-throated response. Admittedly, the approach I have outlined is far more aggressive—necessarily so—than the one we took during our first few years of operation. This moment demands something more than business as usual.”

If it sounds ominous, it's because it is. What's even more alarming is that a cabal of longtime influencers on the Right—the political world's self-appointed moral superiors who now vilify Trump as a greedy, unprincipled charlatan—have their hands in the deep pockets of a Leftist billionaire while pretending to represent core conservative values they clearly have abandoned for political and personal gain.

This list features not only Bill Kristol (as I wrote last month) but others including Evan McMullin, Mindy Finn, Mona Charen, Matthew Dowd, and Linda Chavez. Former GOP officials such as U.S. Representative David Jolly (R-Fla.), former GOP governor Christine Todd Whitman of New Jersey, and former Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff are all tied to Democracy Fund affiliates. All are reliable and frequent “conservative” critics of the president and his administration.

In 2017 alone, Democracy Fund spent more than \$47 million to bankroll dozens of organizations, including several that support anti-Trump Republicans. (Kudos to Democracy Fund for its transparency. Figures only are available through 2017.)

Here are a few:

Stand Up Republic: Headed up by the losing presidential ticket of Evan McMullin and Mindy Finn, this group received up to \$800,000 in 2017 by an affiliate of the Democracy Fund. Rep. Jolly, who scored an appearance on “Real Time with Bill Maher” in October to tell the world he was leaving the GOP because of Trump, is a board member. Stand Up Republic spent \$500,000 on ads to urge Alabama voters to vote against Roy Moore in that state's special Senate election last year. McMullin, Finn, and Jolly are outspoken Trump critics on Twitter and in the media.

Protect Democracy: This new group claims that “Congress [is] abdicating its role, and President Trump is now undermining checks and balances by attacking the judiciary, withholding information from Congress, and punishing states that have opposed his policies.” Several NeverTrumpers serve as advisers to the project, including *National Review* author Mona Charen; ABC News contributor Matthew Dowd; writer Linda Chavez; and, of course, Finn and McMullin. John Dean, Nixon's White House counsel and now vocal critic of Trump, also is an adviser. Democracy Fund committed \$400,000 in 2017 to the group over two years; advisers engage in “specific projects” or others at a more “general level.”

Alliance for Securing Democracy: This outfit “develops comprehensive strategies to defend against, deter, and raise the costs on Russian and other state actors' efforts to undermine democracy and democratic institutions.” It operates Hamilton 68, a dashboard that tracks Twitter activity tied to allegedly Russian accounts: the site has come under criticism for its sketchy methods and results. Kristol and Chertoff are advisers to ASD; it received a grant of up to \$300,000 in 2017 from Democracy Fund.

Defending Democracy Together: Another post-2016 election group, Defending Democracy Together has received at least \$600,000 from a Democracy Fund affiliate this year. Headed by Kristol, Charen, Chavez as well as Trump foes Christine Todd Whitman and former Rep. Bob Inglis (who also works with another Democracy Fund recipient—the R Street Institute—

which received \$650,000 in 2017), Defending Democracy Together is fighting the president on the special counsel probe, tariffs, and immigration policy. The group has run television ads throughout the year demanding that Congress protect the Mueller investigation and that acting Attorney General Matthew Whitaker recuse himself.

Other organizations filled with NeverTrumpers hostile to the president and his administration are Democracy Fund grantees. This includes the Cato Institute, the Bipartisan Policy Center (former GOP Chairman and Trump foe Michael Steele is a board member), and the Niskanen Center.

The Niskanen Center touts itself as a “center right” think tank, with numerous self-styled libertarians (or former libertarians, anyway) on its staff. But its policy agenda is indistinguishable from that of the Democratic National Committee. Niskanen pushes climate change policies, including a carbon tax, loose immigration rules, and universal health care coverage. It has been criticized for its climate advocacy and it’s funded by other left-leaning foundations.

Democracy Fund committed \$200,000 to Niskanen through 2017; its advisory board is a who’s who of NeverTrumpers, including Finn, McMullin, author Tom Nichols, *The Atlantic* editor David Frum, and former Bush official Eliot Cohen. (Board members are not compensated.)

Keep in mind, the figures provided above are only for 2017. It’s likely that funding levels for these various organizations have been matched or surpassed this year as the crusade to destroy Trump’s presidency continues unabated.

For his part, Kristol, the *de facto* leader of the NeverTrump tribe, is hoping to attract more bucks from Leftist tycoons: “Grateful to all—left, right, and center—who are willing to step up to defend liberal democracy and the rule of law,” he tweeted in response to our initial article exposing his Omidyar funding. “Nothing would make me happier if such impressive examples of public-spiritedness on the left inspired more public-spiritedness on the right!”