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Koch pocket pet Pompeo suddenly all 'Koch who?' Koch: 'Oh, that Pompeo'

By Scott Wilson, Tue., Mar. 22 2011 @ 12:52PM
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Sunday's *Washington Post* shined a spotlight on U.S. Rep. **Mike Pompeo**, the Wichita Republican whose campaign last year drew more cash from Koch Industries than any other candidate's.



Pompeo says he doesn't know the Koch brothers ... well.

The 47-year-old House freshman wasted no time finding a couple of projects: defunding a national database of product-safety complaints for consumers, and defunding an EPA registry of greenhouse-gas polluters. Done and done.

You'd think Koch -- which has, according to the *Post*, called the scotching of those lists a top legislative priority -- would be like, "Thanks, Big Mike." Not so much.

The *Wichita Eagle's* editorial department blog, after summarizing the *Post's* story yesterday, got a "Pompeo -- who dat?" brushoff from Koch, which it added to its post:

Koch Industries spokeswoman Melissa Cohlma e-mailed The Eagle with this statement: "According to [opensecrets.org](#), contributions coming from Koch total \$79,500 and this represents 3.5 percent of the total money raised by Congressman Pompeo (which was \$2.241 million). Also pertinent is that Koch has a significant number of employees -- about 2,300 -- who live and work in the 4th District which is represented by Mike. Finally, please be advised that 'eliminating funding for a database of consumer complaints about unsafe products and for an Environmental Protection Agency registry of greenhouse-gas polluters' was not a top legislative priority of Koch Industries."

So, what -- a *medium* priority, maybe? Color us advised.

Guess that makes the webby interconnectedness of Pompeo's career and classic Koch interests a medium coincidence. As the *Post* reports:

Before running for office, Pompeo served as an unpaid trustee at the Flint Hills Public Policy Institute -- now the Kansas Policy Institute -- which was formed by devotees of the libertarian Cato Institute, which has received millions of dollars from the Koch brothers over the years.

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Pompeo's chief of staff, **Mark Chenoweth**, was a lawyer for Koch Industries and used to be chief legal counsel for **Anne Northup**, a Republican Consumer Product Safety Commission commissioner and former congresswoman. Northup opposed the safety database, which the CPSC launched in 2008 after lead was discovered in toys imported from China and Congress passed the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act. Last November, she said the database "wastes taxpayer money, confuses and misleads consumers, raises prices, kills jobs, and damages the reputations of safe and responsible manufacturers."

All you people who get online and make up stories about your G.I. Joe accidentally killing himself with a Ziploc bag, so you can put Hasbro and SC Johnson out of business? You are so busted.

And you conspiracy theorists, freaking out 24/7 about Koch running everything? Chillax, freaks. Pompeo isn't some easily influenced, born-yesterday sock monkey stuffed with dirty money. He's just an old-fashioned, all-American head case who's still proud of the last book he checked out from an evil, socialist public library. *The Post warns* explains:

The freshman lawmaker said his views on these and other issues spring from a long interest in libertarian and conservative thought, first formed at age 15 when he read Ayn Rand's novel *The Fountainhead*.

As we say in Kansas, "You're welcome, America!"

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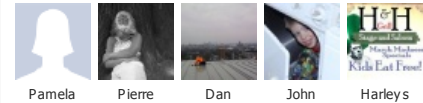
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Normal people read Ayn Rand at 15, then grow up and realize she was full of crap. All others become Republicans.

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