



Billionaire Class Driving America

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The fundamental controlling movement behind America is not the Russians, not the government, not the media, but the well-heeled corporate forces. It is they who have achieved the stealth takeover of the Republican Party as their own agency to weaken the majority and thus democracy. Their movement has replaced the infrastructure for majority rule with one that cripples it.

This movement of billionaires uses all cultural tools to control us. The Republican Party has been their willing agent for pushing the billionaire agenda: killing off unions, keeping millions of citizens from voting, privatizing everything: schools, highways, Medicare, social security, and even prisons. Regulatory action on environmental policy and climate change they want to stop; the legal system must be transformed; the Constitution must be amended.

A big player in the effort to rewrite the social contract, billionaire Charles Koch discovered the utility of Nobel Prize-winning economist, James McGill Buchanan's strategy to disempower the majority. Immersed in secrecy and subterfuge, Buchanan's strategy was to preserve the power of the white elite and divide the citizenry into "makers" and "takers." It was common terminology often used by Republicans like Paul Ryan, former Speaker of the House, to support supply-side economics, including tax cuts for the rich and gutting social programs.

Koch's secret annual meetings of several hundred of the richest Americans laid out funding and implementation plans for the billionaire agenda, including political priorities and funding levels for Republican candidates running that year. The Koch brothers have long used a network of politically active non-profit organizations for funding Republican candidates and otherwise influencing elections. They have often guarded their involvement in groups like Americans for Prosperity which funded the so-called Tea Party Movement against Democrats.

The list of institutions funded by the Kochs and wealthy donors is varied, all with a largesse of hundreds of millions of dollars transferred to them through LLC subsidiaries. It included Cato Institute, Heritage Foundation, Citizens for a sound Economy, Freedom Works, and so on. The list is long and replete with patriotic-sounding names which fund legislation and policies that benefit the very rich.

The Heritage Foundation gave us Trump ultra-conservative judges like Brett Kavanaugh; The Center to Protect Patient Rights is still working to repeal or gut Obamacare.

But all-in-all billionaires and their Republican agents are the fundamental controlling movement in America and are not reluctant to use whatever means they can to gain purchase. Trump is their wild card in their tribe who fits well into their agenda. His use of Putin also fits nicely into their goals except for what the independent investigation by Mueller will uncover. We already see Republican complicity in Trump's obstruction and even his collusion with Russia.

Republican media control has always depended on Fox News with mainstream media pickup, but the Trump media avalanche of daily outrageous acts tends to bury the importance of how he debilitates democracy. After all, his media monopoly, though it is personally masturbatory for Trump, it always represents billionaire interests, Trump being the lead Republican agent of the corporate agenda.

But Trump and his foreign allies also extend his media savvy to the internet.

The internet has shown that influence can come from anyone, anywhere, visible or invisible, paid for by any power and approaching you in many ways. The Russians used it with social media to demonize Hillary Clinton; neither Facebook or Twitter seeming to care as long as they were paid. Trump also used Facebook to demonize Clinton through *Cambridge Analytica*.

Almost all Republican leaders didn't seem to care whether Facebook and Twitter's customers were foreign or domestic if the GOP kept control of government. This obviously included most of the corporate culture, who jealously guard profit and agenda above all else.

The philosophy that Republicans espouse is libertarian, something not popular with most Americans, which is the reason for the subterfuge and demagoguery of Republicans, and the billionaires who fund them. Those who subscribe to the libertarian philosophy believe that the only legitimate role of government is to ensure the rule of law, guarantee social order, and provide for the national defense. That is why there is a campaign against Obamacare and the screed against social spending.

Certainly, Charles Koch has always pushed libertarian philosophy and pays for such a stated allegiance among Republicans. Pro-corporate justices like Kavanaugh, Roberts, and Gorsuch – all selected by the Koch-funded Heritage Foundation – must support the Koch agenda. That is why Buchanan's libertarian economic philosophy appealed to Koch in the early 1970s.

Buchanan wanted to return America to "the free society" where the "liberty of the individual" is preserved. The individual with wealth shouldn't be forced to pay for an increased number of public goods and social programs they had no personal say in approving.

With his money and influence, Koch has probably done more in modern times than anyone else to marshal forces in that direction. Machiavellian in his libertarian ways, Charles Koch knows that using Trump is a means to his agenda.