


"Dave Johnson is a fantastic grandfather of the blogosphere."

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## Who Opposes American Manufacturing? II

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*This post originally appeared at [Campaign for America's Future \(CAF\)](#) at their [Blog for OurFuture](#) as part of the [Making It In America](#) project. I am a Fellow with CAF.*

A country's economic power comes from manufacturing. But while other countries have industrial policies, America has a de-industrialization policy. We have handed our country's manufacturing capacity over to other countries, and as a result we have to borrow more and more to be able to buy the things that we used to make. How did this come to be? Who would be against American manufacturing?

The other day, in the first [Who Would Be Against American Manufacturing?](#) post I wrote about representatives of foreign interests lobbying in the US for trade policies *that benefit companies in other countries at the expense of America's factories, workers, companies, communities and economic power*. It is to be expected that a country will work to increase manufacturing within its borders - even if we don't - and these firms helping the efforts of other countries are required to register with the Department of Justice as "foreign agents." I traced an anonymous comment left at my own blog back to one of these, after I [wrote about](#) President Obama's upcoming "China tire case" trade decision.

But are all foreign agents registering, as they are supposed to? The other day I came across an interesting example of an organization that is working to convince Americans to hand over our manufacturing capacity to other countries. In my post, [National Association Of Manufacturers Blasts ... American Manufacturing?](#) I wrote,

"Why is the NAM blasting Meyerson for writing a column promoting American manufacturing? ... They quote Daniel J. Ikenson of the Cato Institute. . . . Cato receives a great deal of financial support from non-manufacturing interests including commodities and securities traders, tobacco companies, communications companies, software companies and oil companies. They also receive support from non-American manufacturing interests, including the Korea International Trade Association."

Let's connect the dots. For some reason NAM blasts a writer for supporting American manufacturing, and quotes the Cato Institute for support. The [mission statement](#) of the [Cato Institute Center for Trade Policy Studies](#) promotes "open markets. They claim that "open markets mean wider choices and lower prices for businesses and consumers." They advocate that the United States open its markets to anyone, no matter what, even advocating American policies that "are not contingent upon reciprocal policies in other countries." They say, "Studies by Trade Center scholars have found benefits in the elimination of U.S. trade barriers regardless of what other countries choose to do."

Got that? They are saying we should allow other countries to cheat *and like it*, that free trade as a one-way street where we only buy and they only sell is just fine, and basically that *we should just give up our manufacturing capacity and let other countries have it without a fight*. Just let them take it from us - and by the way anything else is "protectionism" and "politicization of trade." America should not "dictate marketplace results, or increase bureaucratic interference in the economy as a condition of market access." The mission statement goes on about how the United States should lead by example and just open our markets, etc... It's just amazingly anti-American. Go read it.

**WHY would Cato Institute advocate this?** Is it *just* weird libertarian cult ideology? Perhaps a look at who is paying for this advocacy will provide a clue. While mostly funded by individuals, Cato's funders include many of the usual right-wing funding suspects: Koch, Scaife, tobacco companies, Exxon and other oil companies, Wall Street... But one sponsor jumped out at me: *the Korea International Trade Association*. (Honda, Mazda, Mitsubishi, Toyota and Volkswagon are sponsors as well.) Dots connected: Cato is receiving funding from the Korea International Trade Association, and then turning around and advocating that American hand over its manufacturing capacity to other countries!

**So I checked, and did not find that Cato Institute registered as a "Registered Foreign Agent." Why not?**

Also, [according to SourceWatch](#), Cato provides "substantial" funds to several other "like-minded" think tanks. It would be interesting to see how many of those think tanks *also* advocate that America hand its manufacturing capacity over to other countries, and I am certainly interested in finding out whether Cato possibly serves as a "pass-through" for funds from outside of the United States. Is there "intellectual money-laundering" going on here?

Is funding from non-American sources reaching into our internal trade-policy discussion without disclosure? If so, we need to know about it. Let me be more