

Why all the dithering over disclosure of funding? It is free speech

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President Obama and his hatchet man David Axelrod continue hypocritically to rail against free speech.

Obama called political groups who back Republicans without disclosing their source of funding "a threat to democracy" and made unsubstantiated allegations that the U.S. Chamber of Commerce was funding political messages with foreign funds.

According to [The Wall Street Journal's John Fund](#), Axelrod went on CNN and implied that when "people don't disclose, there's a reason."

White House press secretary Robert Gibbs, got into the act too, [according to USA Today](#), which quoted him as saying, "It's a pretty easy political solution to simply show the American people where the money is coming from."

Why the sudden demand for openness? The Federalist and Anti-Federalist Papers were written anonymously, as was Common Sense by Tom Paine and John Locke's treatises on government.

Fund noted that Obama in 2008 declined to release the names of donors of less than \$200 and, in fact, turned off the address checking software on his website that would have detected foreign cash. The Federal Election Commission was given a complete list of Obama donors, but it has never been made public.

"If Mr. Axelrod believes so deeply in disclosure," Fund writes, "he might begin by practicing it at home."

In this podcast at Cato Institute, John Samples points out that anonymous speech is free speech, too, and mentions Clarence Thomas' dissent in Citizens United.