

NORTHWEST ARKANSAS Democrat Gazette

Koch Brothers Don't Deserve to be Vilified

Barbara Foreman

August 5, 2017

Fran Alexander's recent piece about the Koch brothers, David and Charles, was another example of those seemingly ignorant of the truth when they demonize that family, the vast business organization they've built and their generosity, which benefits untold numbers of people.

Leftist media take every opportunity to cast the Kochs as surely one of the most dire threats to America, but never mention the egregious George Soros, who made his billions playing the stock market, and supports all sorts of groups and activities that only serve to engender civil disobedience and violence.

Fred Koch, the brothers' father, was a chemical engineer who founded Koch Industries and a philanthropist who donated his time and many millions supporting universities, museums and various activities for the benefit of others.

As to the brothers, Fran Alexander begins with the nonsensical charge that wealthy people use their money to gain control of the government -- her example is all the governorships, legislatures and red states now holding sway in this country. Surely, it couldn't be what happened to this country over the past eight years, and an opposition party that outstanding leaders such as FDR and JFK would no longer recognize.

Of course, these days billionaires are a favorite whipping dog -- even though most of them probably got that way by hard work, making wise choices and knowing how to get things done. Fortunately, we have several of those running our government, along with all those generals.

Privately owned Koch industries is an extensive, highly diversified group of enterprises that employs more than 100,000 people operating in almost every state, including Arkansas. Recent television commercials would indicate those employees are well compensated and proud of their company.

In the past, there were problems with pollution; however, in 2016 Koch Bros. was rated No. 1 for pollution prevention by the Environmental Protection Agency. The former head of Georgia Pacific, who was kept on when that company was purchased by Koch, has voiced his surprise at the changes in management, such as reinvestment of profits and quick approval of suggestions that could eventually benefit operations.

Another charge is that these devious brothers "use the tax laws for philanthropy, donating to colleges and universities" to help mold future leaders after their view. However, considering the sad, anti-American atmosphere that now permeates our schools of higher learning, the result would more likely resemble Fran Alexander's ideology.

Insight into said ideology could be her criticism of two highly respected "think tanks," the Cato Institute and the Heritage Foundation -- which surely must be subversive, because they were "founded and/or funded by wealthy business tycoons" -- and also ALEC, which supports politicians who are "dedicated to the principles of limited government, free markets and federalism."

Isn't that what our Founding Fathers were dedicated to?