

The Passy Press

Letter to the Editor

From: John C MacMurray johncurtismacmurray@gmail.com
To: Nick Gardiner enpg@thepassypress.com
Date: Jan 17, 2016, at 6:44 PM,
Subject: Novitski's Essay

Dear Sir

I enjoyed reading the American oligarchy article, as I do all that gets published by The Passy Press.

However, on the merits, I found Mr. Novitski's effort a brief for a slimly supported, and not particularly threatening, proposition that government is increasingly being controlled by an emerging oligarchy. It seems to be a variant theme on the more generally heard threat to American values of super wealth in the hands of a fraction of 1% of the population.

I think that the proposition advanced by Mr. Novitski lacks foundation, in that it is not made clear

(1) What portion of the \$2.6 billion campaign expenses for 2012 (expected \$3 billion for 2016) was attributable to political contributions made by the emerging "Oligarchy", nor how that breaks down as between the conservatives and liberals (Koch vs Soros)—i.e., to the point of the substance of the proposition—do the oligarchs represent a majority of campaign contributors? That would be an obvious measure of the potential influence of this particular group of political patrons, and

(2) How the oligarchy contributors of a given political stripe, as a group (i.e., oligarchs work together) are able to combine themselves to reduce the supported candidate to the role of their puppet. If that is not the case, there is no power of oligarchy, only the ancient play of patronage. The Republican agenda, for example, strikes me as being more influenced by the Christian right (populist, not oligarchical), than by the Koch brothers. Nor do I see a pawn for any particular oligarch among the candidates still standing for either party.

Does not Mr. Novitski need to show that political agendas of a candidate derive from the motives and brains of a certain subset of campaign contributors, and that those contributors are a self identifying group who work together to exercise political power as a self perpetuating oligarchy? If not, the financial support of such contributors for agendas that derive from the force of others is nothing more than just that, financial support.

As for that, the more interesting article might be a dissection of the merits/demerits of Citizens United. Personally, I find the campaign contributions of juridical entities—corporations, unions, etc., most offensive, especially as they serve the dictates of management, not their collective membership, whose views differ among themselves. Teacher unions (indeed, all unions) contribute with virtual monolithic support for management's candidate, regardless of the differing opinions of the rank and file.

I advanced the idea in my article that American education should require constrictive public service of all high school graduates, and I support that. However, I am less convinced than Mr. Novitski that public service would have any impact on the outcome of the Oligarchy he conjures, as that necessarily focuses on a small group, who may be presumed to safe guard their personal interests no matter how much public service they may be subject to.

Sincerely,

John MacMurray

John MacMurray is a retired lawyer, and a graduate of Princeton University and Columbia Law School. He has worked as a teacher, served on supervising boards of several schools and is a member of the advisory board of Legal Outreach, New York, NY. He resides in East Chatham, NY.

See below, for some perspective on sources of

Top campaign contributors in 2012 Presidential campaign Where are the oligarchs?

Rank	Organization	Total Contributions	To Dems & Liberals	To Repubs & Conservs	% to Dems & Liberals	% to Repubs & Conservs
1	Service Employees International Union	\$224,273,550	\$222,520,804	\$1,294,169	99%	1%
2	ActBlue	\$194,439,211	\$193,985,073	\$59,727	100%	0%
3	American Fedn of St/Cnty/Munic Employees	\$94,708,977	\$93,739,954	\$671,755	99%	1%
4	National Education Assn	\$93,656,468	\$89,590,047	\$3,192,344	97%	3%
5	Fahr LLC	\$80,409,603	\$80,409,603	\$0	100%	0%
6	American Federation of Teachers	\$70,769,128	\$69,987,011	\$348,050	100%	1%
7	Las Vegas Sands	\$70,417,242	\$30,950	\$70,379,411	0%	100%
8	Carpenters & Joiners Union	\$70,069,398	\$65,240,497	\$4,682,026	93%	7%
9	National Assn of Realtors	\$69,556,807	\$24,973,895	\$26,678,035	48%	52%
10	Intl Brotherhood of Electrical Workers	\$66,273,173	\$65,000,555	\$997,418	99%	2%
11	United Food & Commercial Workers Union	\$64,072,657	\$63,589,291	\$306,750	100%	1%
12	AT&T Inc.	\$62,395,194	\$26,064,645	\$36,178,562	42%	58%
13	Laborers Union	\$58,350,719	\$50,642,172	\$3,479,566	94%	6%
14	Perry Homes	\$55,513,249	\$22,300	\$55,220,949	0%	100%
15	Goldman Sachs	\$54,453,925	\$28,376,553	\$25,992,022	52%	48%
16	American Assn for Justice	\$49,343,405	\$45,745,238	\$3,452,317	93%	7%
17	AFL-CIO	\$46,919,763	\$45,364,095	\$1,135,676	98%	2%
18	Soros Fund Management	\$46,644,808	\$45,511,318	\$1,090,450	98%	2%
19	Contran Corp	\$46,091,117	\$655,868	\$45,333,099	1%	99%
20	Plumbers/Pipefitters Union	\$45,314,065	\$41,043,291	\$1,517,870	96%	4%
21	United Auto Workers	\$44,540,584	\$43,606,279	\$233,380	100%	1%
22	Communications Workers of America	\$44,279,765	\$43,850,787	\$237,790	100%	1%
23	Teamsters Union	\$43,283,858	\$40,830,506	\$2,122,448	95%	5%
24	Adels	\$43,006,118	\$20,000	\$42,994,018	0%	100%
25	Newsweb Corp	\$40,350,521	\$39,959,271	\$251,250	99%	1%
26	EMILY's List	\$38,960,245	\$38,664,879	\$4,794	100%	0%
27	Renaissance Technologies	\$36,896,127	\$7,659,966	\$29,196,074	21%	79%
28	United Parcel Service	\$36,438,428	\$12,961,233	\$23,416,655	36%	64%
29	Citigroup Inc.	\$36,245,564	\$17,266,852	\$18,579,303	48%	52%
30	JPMorgan Chase & Co	\$35,675,167	\$16,897,267	\$18,677,045	48%	53%
31	American Bankers Assn	\$35,392,446	\$12,310,296	\$22,976,625	35%	65%
32	National Auto Dealers Assn	\$35,227,985	\$11,164,211	\$24,049,774	32%	68%
33	Sheet Metal Workers Union	\$34,885,391	\$34,154,806	\$608,585	98%	2%
34	Blue Cross/Blue Shield	\$34,235,758	\$12,495,442	\$21,692,990	37%	64%
35	Machinists/Aerospace Workers Union	\$33,910,938	\$33,335,147	\$403,791	99%	1%
36	Elliott Management	\$33,809,998	\$137,360	\$33,540,488	0%	100%
37	National Assn of Letter Carriers	\$33,678,576	\$24,896,799	\$2,431,475	91%	9%
38	National Beer Wholesalers Assn	\$33,055,541	\$11,872,716	\$21,161,075	36%	64%
39	Microsoft Corp	\$33,043,368	\$18,365,752	\$14,571,649	56%	44%
40	Victory Campaign 2004	\$33,038,925	\$33,038,925	\$0	100%	0%
41	American Medical Assn	\$32,950,717	\$13,204,935	\$19,690,882	40%	60%
42	Operating Engineers Union	\$32,466,960	\$28,011,016	\$4,373,594	87%	14%
43	General Electric	\$32,211,821	\$15,024,023	\$17,138,366	47%	53%
44	Lockheed Martin	\$31,247,085	\$13,239,136	\$17,965,568	42%	58%
45	Bank of America	\$30,833,206	\$12,642,197	\$18,154,452	41%	59%
46	United Steelworkers	\$30,352,363	\$19,961,909	\$78,600	100%	0%
47	National Assn of Home Builders	\$30,030,505	\$10,149,390	\$19,849,365	34%	66%
48	Bloomberg Lp	\$29,983,536	\$11,544,433	\$725,627	94%	6%

49	Koch Industries	\$29,519,116	\$1,717,198	\$27,890,922	6%	94%
50	American Dental Assn	\$29,427,233	\$10,744,636	\$13,472,966	44%	56%
51	Morgan Stanley	\$29,264,245	\$12,651,050	\$16,555,910	43%	57%
52	Verizon Communications	\$29,153,366	\$11,729,226	\$17,323,826	40%	60%
53	Deloitte LLP	\$28,555,326	\$10,230,766	\$18,258,431	36%	64%
54	International Assn of Fire Fighters	\$28,458,881	\$24,119,576	\$4,221,205	85%	15%
55	Credit Union National Assn	\$27,684,074	\$13,397,970	\$14,218,520	49%	52%
56	Ernst & Young	\$27,561,058	\$11,296,889	\$16,107,932	41%	59%
57	Comcast Corp	\$26,146,535	\$14,602,386	\$11,399,896	56%	44%
58	Time Warner	\$25,795,246	\$19,317,056	\$6,296,594	75%	25%
59	PricewaterhouseCoopers	\$25,602,575	\$9,250,072	\$16,296,729	36%	64%
60	American Hospital Assn	\$25,323,202	\$13,286,902	\$11,993,254	53%	47%
61	Shangri-La Entertainment	\$25,285,583	\$25,277,633	\$7,950	100%	0%
62	Boeing Co	\$25,178,381	\$11,662,584	\$13,484,867	46%	54%
63	NextGen Climate Action	\$25,074,615	\$25,074,615	\$0	100%	0%
64	Honeywell International	\$25,022,293	\$10,859,813	\$14,138,500	43%	57%
65	UBS AG	\$24,852,904	\$10,093,823	\$14,539,806	41%	59%
66	Democratic Governors Assn	\$24,303,538	\$20,204,538	\$0	100%	0%
67	Ironworkers Union	\$24,095,933	\$22,914,063	\$1,119,370	95%	5%
68	Northrop Grumman	\$23,283,984	\$9,946,746	\$13,273,809	43%	57%
69	Union Pacific Corp	\$23,057,938	\$6,400,089	\$16,653,164	28%	72%
70	Air Line Pilots Assn	\$22,720,793	\$18,427,543	\$4,247,250	81%	19%
71	AFLAC Inc.	\$22,185,661	\$9,618,951	\$12,583,215	43%	57%
72	Club for Growth	\$22,061,524	\$114,519	\$21,684,540	1%	100%
73	Pfizer Inc.	\$21,946,163	\$7,757,637	\$14,162,036	35%	65%
74	National Rifle Assn	\$21,927,085	\$3,832,742	\$18,075,095	18%	83%
75	National Assn of Insurance & Financial Advisors	\$21,783,074	\$8,957,530	\$12,800,044	41%	59%
76	National Air Traffic Controllers Assn	\$21,742,804	\$17,824,004	\$3,892,800	82%	18%
77	American Postal Workers Union	\$20,878,639	\$19,592,051	\$507,480	98%	3%
78	Altria Group	\$20,534,120	\$6,335,879	\$14,203,787	31%	69%
79	New York Life Insurance	\$20,347,881	\$9,984,398	\$10,358,853	49%	51%
80	Credit Suisse Group	\$20,306,475	\$8,486,377	\$11,780,398	42%	58%
81	Raytheon Co	\$20,284,150	\$8,698,631	\$11,523,857	43%	57%
82	Akin, Gump et al	\$20,074,428	\$12,728,618	\$7,311,335	64%	37%
83	National Rural Electric Cooperative Assn	\$19,441,177	\$8,757,846	\$10,664,081	45%	55%
84	Pharmaceutical Product Development Inc.	\$19,139,311	\$3,000	\$24,605,701	0%	100%
85	City of New York, NY	\$19,104,269	\$15,943,861	\$752,059	96%	5%
86	Chartwell Partners	\$19,005,228	\$232,700	\$18,724,828	1%	99%
87	American Financial Group	\$18,755,016	\$2,231,079	\$16,546,851	12%	88%
88	General Dynamics	\$18,754,106	\$8,530,811	\$10,155,983	46%	54%
89	United Transportation Union	\$18,726,795	\$16,404,729	\$2,242,546	88%	12%
90	American Institute of CPAs	\$18,358,395	\$7,629,544	\$10,695,551	42%	58%
91	Chevron Corp	\$18,337,183	\$3,343,481	\$14,951,169	18%	82%
92	National Cable & Telecommunications Assn	\$17,892,484	\$8,465,285	\$9,385,549	47%	53%
93	Wal-Mart Stores	\$17,828,261	\$6,176,846	\$11,639,377	35%	65%
94	Exxon Mobil	\$17,568,663	\$2,333,270	\$15,193,978	13%	87%
95	Anheuser-Busch InBev	\$17,415,865	\$7,902,337	\$9,491,664	45%	55%
96	Wells Fargo	\$17,367,746	\$6,087,239	\$11,235,666	35%	65%
97	Republican Governors Assn	\$17,363,969	\$850	\$16,382,021	0%	100%
98	TRT Holdings	\$17,361,862	\$13,150	\$17,348,712	0%	100%
99	FedEx Corp	\$17,149,229	\$6,535,364	\$10,601,440	38%	62%
100	Amway/Alticor Inc.	\$17,114,190	\$63,835	\$17,266,360	0%	100%

Partisan tilt:

- Solidly Democrat/Liberal

- Leans Democrat/Liberal
- Solidly Republican/Conservative
- Leans Republican/Conservative
- On the fence

Based on data released by the FEC on March 09, 2015.

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See something wrong or want to suggest an improvement? Contact us.

As of January 17, 2016, 1,917 groups organized as super PACs have reported total receipts of \$321,158,961 and total independent expenditures of \$149,410,210 in the 2016 cycle.

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From: John C MacMurray johncurtismacmurray@undisclosed.com
 To: Nick Gardiner enpg@thepassypress.com
 Date: On Jan 17, 2016, at 3:12 PM
 Subject: Political Correctness

Dear Sir

For the last six odd years, almost all of the things I wanted to write or say, have been stymied by the modern term referred to as 'POLITICAL CORRECTNESS'. Although I consider myself reasonably fluent in English, that term was not in my vocabulary. Curiosity got the better of me so I decided to do a little research, and after two weeks of chasing fruitless leads, I found what I'd been looking for at the Truman Library and Museum in Independence Missouri.

An unnamed source there sent me copies of four telegrams between then-President Harry Truman and Gen Douglas MacArthur on the day before the actual signing of the WW2 Surrender Agreement in September 1945. The contents of those four telegrams below are exactly as received at the end of the war -- not a word has been added or deleted!

(1) Tokyo, Japan 0800-September 1,1945
 To: President Harry S Truman
 From: General D A MacArthur

Tomorrow we meet with those yellow-bellied bastards and sign the Surrender Documents, any last minute instructions?

(2) Washington, D C 10:00 September 1, 1945
 To MacArthur
 From: H S Truman

Congratulations, job well done, but you must tone down your obvious dislike of the Japanese when discussing the terms of the surrender with the press, because some of your remarks are fundamentally not Politically Correct!

(3) Tokyo, Japan 1630-September 1945
 To: H S Truman
 From: D A MacArthur and C H Nimitz

Wilco Sir, but both Chester and I are somewhat confused, exactly what does the term politically correct mean?

(4) Washington, D C 2120-September 1, 1945
To: D A MacArthur/C H Nimitz
From: H S Truman

Political Correctness is a doctrine, recently fostered by a delusional, illogical minority and promoted by a sick mainstream media, which holds forth the proposition that it is entirely possible to pick up a piece of shit by the clean end!

Now, with special thanks to the Truman Museum and Harry himself, you and I finally have a full understanding of what 'POLITICAL CORRECTNESS' really means!