The Coors Connection

How Coors Family Philanthropy Undermines Democratic Pluralism

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The New Right feeds on discontent, anger, insecurity, and resentment, and flourishes on backlash politics. Through its interlocking network, it seeks to veto whatever it perceives to threaten its way of life—busing, women's liberation, gay rights, pornography, loss of the Panama Canal—and promotes a beefed-up defense budget, lower taxes, and reduced federal regulation of small business.

The New Right network supports whoever shares its desire for radical political change and its resentments of the status quo. As such, the New Right is anything but conservative.

The replacement [in 1979 of the] chairman of the American Conservative Union was a reflection of an attempt by traditional conservatives within the Washington, D.C., area to minimize the influence of New Right leaders like Colorado brewer Joseph Coors, his Washington political operative Paul Weyrich, and fundraiser Richard Viguerie.

The attempt by New Right leaders to control the organization can be traced to Coors' decision in 1971 to bankroll right-wing organizations.

Alan Crawford
Thunder on the Right
1980
groups which supports the Helms network—the Pioneer Fund, a foundation which finances efforts to prove that African-Americans are genetically inferior to whites. Ellis has said, "The eventual goal of this movement [racial integration] is racial intermarriage and the disappearance of the Negro race by fusing into the white." While Ellis has since disavowed his segregationist position, his associates in the Helms organizational network are still tied to the Pioneer Fund board and receive Pioneer funds.108

Recipients of Pioneer grants have included William Shockley, Arthur Jensen, and Roger Pearson. Pearson has written that "inferior races" should be "exterminated." All three, and others, were funded during Ellis' directorship on the Pioneer board. Yet Ellis served on the CNP's thirteen-member executive committee with Holly Coors, Paul Weyrich, and Heritage Foundation president Edwin Feulner until June 1989. Oliver North and Reed Larson of the anti-union National Right to Work Committee recently joined the executive committee.109

After Ellis' one-year term as president of CNP in 1982-83, he was succeeded by Nelson Bunker Hunt, Pat Robertson, and Richard DeVos of the Amway Corporation. Some of the other board members of the Council for National Policy also have colorful pasts.110

BOARD MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL FOR NATIONAL POLICY

Richard Shoff is owner of Lincoln Log Homes in North Carolina. A former Ku Klux Klan leader in Indiana, Shoff is a financial supporter of High Frontier, a Star Wars group allied with a tiny occult group headed by Elizabeth Clare Prophet called the Church Universal and Triumphant. Shoff also supports the Conservative Caucus, a group which cheerleads for the apartheid regime in South Africa. Shoff was recently implicated in a questionable fundraising scheme shut down by the Attorney General of Illinois. Funds collected under the name "Children with AIDS Foundation" were slated to support a homophobic right-wing religious activist, Rev. H. Edward Rowe, and a group of private investors, but the funds were allegedly paid to investors and fundraisers, with no funds spent on any actual projects.111

Jay Parker is a former registered agent for a territory of South Africa, paid for by the South African regime.112

John McGoff was exposed as a partner in a secret South African government attempt to buy newspapers in the U.S. as covert propaganda outlets. McGoff serves on the editorial advisory board of the Washington Times which frequently supports the South African apartheid government in news and editorial columns. The Washington Times, part of Moon's Unification network, received an award from the Council for National Policy in 1984.113 According to reporter Murray Waas, South Africa bought into a secret partnership arrangement with the Washington Times in 1982.114

Don McAlvany, a frequent traveler to South Africa, has held meetings with South African military and police groups to organize pressure to get the South African government to disavow the Alvor accords that ended warfare against Angola and SWAPO on April 1, 1989. While in South Africa, McAlvany suggested that someone might want to kill Archbishop Desmond Tutu but immediately retracted the statement. He is a contributing editor to the John Birch Society's weekly, New American.115

James McClellan is a Helms associate active in repealing civil rights legislation. He is also an associate of racist Roger Pearson.116

Ben Blackburn is a former member of Congress noted for opposing civil rights legislation. He is also a past board chairman of the Heritage Foundation.117

David Noebel is now with Summit Ministries and was a former Associate Evangelist of Billy James Hargis' Christian Crusade, which built itself in part during the 1950's through racist appeals, primarily in the South. Noebel wrote two books in the 1960's: Communism, Hypnotism and the Beatles and Rhythm, Riots and Revolution. The latter book attempted to prove that folk music was a communist plot.118

William D’Onofrio is a member of the National Association for Neighborhood Schools (NANS), a group formed to stop busing to achieve racial integration which attracted some unsavory supporters and leaders such as Ralph Scott. Scott has ties to the racialist Pioneer Fund and has endorsed racist writings. Former NANS president James Venema has said, "Ralph Scott is credited with being the father of NANS." (Ralph Scott is also a past vice-president of DANK, the German-American National Congress, a group Lucy Dawidowicz, author of the definitive The War Against the Jews 1933-1945, characterizes as pro-Nazi.) D’Onofrio is also the Maryland coordinator for the Conservative Caucus.119

Robert Weiner is head of Maranatha, a "shepherding discipleship" religious cult. He directs members to do political work for rightist causes and candidates.120

R.J. Rushdoony is ideological leader of the "Christian Reconstruction" movement. He advocates that Christian fundamentalists take "dominion" over the U.S., abolish democracy, and institute the death penalty for chil-
dren who disobey their parents. According to Christianity Today, Rushdoony also believes, "True to the letter of Old Testament law, homosexuals . . . adulterers, blasphemers, astrologers, and others will be executed." He believes there is no need for the U.S. Constitution and calls democracy a "heresy." He was a featured speaker at a 1983 Free Congress Foundation Conference on Criminal Justice Reform. FCF's conference literature described Rushdoony as a "prominent Christian writer."111

**Gary North**, another Christian Reconstructionist, has written the following statement concerning abortion, "How long do we expect God to withhold His wrath, if by crushing the humanists who promote mass abortion . . . . He might spare the lives of literally millions of innocents?" He Institute for Christian Economics advocates a system of slavery out of which Christians could work their way after a set period of time. Since the CNP is deeply involved in foreign policy issues, it is worth noting that North believes:

The so-called underdeveloped societies are underdeveloped because they are socialist, demonist and cursed. The Bible tells us that the citizens of the Third World ought to feel guilty, to fall on their knees and repent from their Godless, rebellious socialist ways. They should feel guilty because they are guilty, both individually and corporately.122

**Robert Grant** is chairman of Christian Voice and American Freedom Coalition. The former group is tied to "shepherding discipleship" while the latter is a political front for Moon's Unification network and has threatened to form a hard-right political party.124

**Rev. Jerry Falwell** for many years has been leader of the Moral Majority and still is a major force in the televised evangelical movement.

**Ron Godwin**, formerly second in command at Moral Majority, now is an executive for Moon's Unification network and has threatened to form a hard-right political party.124

**Reed Larson** is head of the National Right to Work Committee. Henry Walther, also formerly of this anti-union group, is a CNP member as well. Larson's group receives support from the Coors Company.126

**Morton Blackwell**, who also has received Coors support for a number of years, is president of International Policy Forum. IPF trains right-wing conservatives around the world in New Right political techniques. A long-time associate of Paul Weyrich, who chairs IPF, Blackwell was one of the New Right activists attempting to take over the American Independent Party (see the Free Congress Foundation section) in 1976. To his credit, he was
the foremost voice opposing the GOP's electoral collaboration with neo-Nazi cult leader Lyndon LaRouche in 1976. More recently, however, his Leadership Institute has been providing political campaign training to members of Maranatha, the shepherding cult.27

Don Wildmon, whose campaign against the movie The Last Temptation of Christ was charged with using anti-Semitic propaganda, is a member of the steering committee of COR. Wildmon has claimed that Universal Studios is "a company dominated by non-Christians." Wildmon also regularly threatens television networks with boycotts for "indecent" content in their programs.28

Phyllis Schlafly is a leading anti-feminist who first came to national attention as an ardent anti-communist. She claimed the Republican Party was controlled by an elaborate conspiracy of bankers and financiers who were assisting a global communist conquest. In A Choice Not an Echo, Schlafly says that the "New York kingmakers...some of whom profess to be Republicans...favor aiding and abetting Red Russia."29 Schlafly defends as a hero the late Cardinal Mindszenty of Hungary, a noted anti-communist

The origins of the CNP are not found in mainstream conservatism or the traditional Republican Party but in the nativist and reactionary circles of the Radical Right, including the John Birch Society. The view on the Radical Right that an organization such as CNP was needed stemmed from their perception that the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR)—closely identified with the Rockefeller family—was selling out American interests in the pursuit of an imagined left-wing foreign policy agenda. This conspiratorial critique was begun in earnest about thirty years ago by the John

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groundwater was contaminated from the landfill to such an extent that the Lowry Landfill. Nearby which targets the most contaminated sites in the country. Instead of seeking alternative waste disposal sites, the Coors crowd manipulated the regulations to allow further dumping at Lowry. The landfill was managed by a Chicago-area firm, Chemical Waste Management, which was a client of James Sanderson, the EPA consultant who also worked for Coors. Sanderson arranged for Steven Durham to lift the no-dumping ban at Lowry for two weeks in 1982. Durham even advised the waste company to begin moving drums of liquid toxic wastes to the dumpsite known as the Lowry Landfill. Nearby which targets the most contaminated sites in the country.247

An estimated forty-six drums of waste from Coors were stored at the burial site just before the ban was temporarily lifted. Coors had been disposing of such liquids as lead dross (from can manufacturing), flammable solvents, and cyanide solution. Congressional committees found that EPA knew that the landfill operator, Chemical Waste Management, kept two sets of books to conceal leaks at the dump. One EPA staffer told the National Catholic Reporter that the Lowry landfill situation was "a case of shady deals being worked out between EPA people, Coors people, and Chemical Waste."249

The Coors Foundation has funded Arnold's Center for the Defense of Free Enterprise, in Bellevue, Washington. In recent years, Arnold's group has shared offices and directors with the American Freedom Coalition, the political arm of Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church discussed earlier. In turn, Arnold is the registered agent for the American Freedom Coalition in the state of Washington. Arnold told a Canadian newspaper, "The Center for the Defense of Free Enterprise is allied in a movement [with the Unification Church] but has no affiliation with it in terms of money exchange."250

When the incoming Reagan Administration was looking for a Secretary of the Interior, their first choice was not James Watt but former Wyoming Governor Cliff Hansen. When Hansen declined the job, he suggested James Watt to the Reagan recruiters. Joe Coors immediately approved the idea, got the support of Senator Paul Laxalt, and Watt quickly became Reagan's nominee.250

Watt became a major source of controversy: he began selling off public lands to developers, giving mining and oil interests access to ecologically sensitive public lands, wildlife refuges, and parks, and he began expanding oil drilling on the outer shelf. From the beginning of his Cabinet tenure in 1981, Watt advocated policies which were unpopular with much of the public; he was frequently criticized in the media.

In 1982, the Free Congress Research and Education Foundation initiated a project (it was Weyrich's idea) to produce a book that would counter critics of Watt and present Watt in a more "balanced" way. Ron Arnold wrote At the Eye of the Storm: James Watt and the Environmentalists and in it found no substantive reason to criticize "Jim" (as the book often referred to Watt). Instead, Arnold argued that environmentalists are insidious totalitarians who are "anti-technology, anti-civilization, anti-humanity." These adjectives, and his attacks on some environmentalists as drug pushers, bear an uncanny resemblance to the propaganda of the neo-Nazi Lyndon LaRouche. Arnold's book even cites a LaRouche follower as a source for some allegations of drug ties to environmentalism. LaRouche met with Watt in 1981 after Watt became Secretary of the Interior and former LaRouche group members have claimed that Watt nearly hired LaRouche as a consultant. Watt has stated, however, that he felt instinctively that "something was off" with LaRouche.251

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The anti-environmental character of the Coors network is also reflected in the Heritage Foundation's recommendations for the Interior Department and the Environmental Protection Agency. In its 1981 book, Mandate for Leadership, Heritage declared that the Carter Administration "displayed zealotry" in its restrictions on surface mining for coal. It called for a long-term "review of rules on surface mining to identify those regulations that "unnecessarily burden" coal companies. Of wilderness areas, Heritage suggested, "The new Administration should issue a Solicitor's Opinion revising and clarifying the exploration provisions of the Wilderness Act, declaring that such exploration constitutes the dominant use of such lands." (emphasis added) In other areas, such as water policy, Heritage insisted that state law should prevail over federal policy, and that water law in Western states "must remain inviolate." After contributing to the Heritage recommendations, Perry Pendley was named by Watt as his Deputy Assistant Secretary for Energy and Minerals. Another Heritage contributor, Dave Russell, became Deputy Assistant Secretary for Land and Water Resources. In 1983, Heritage continued to advocate corporate access to minerals on public lands but argued for the sale of those lands to developers.253

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Heritage also recommended "decentralizing" decision-making for the Environmental Protection Agency, "delegating functions to the states and continuing decision-making to private individuals." The author of this proposal, Gail Ann Norton, was the senior counsel with the Mountain States Legal Foundation.254

If EPA functions and decision-making are left to private individuals such as Joe Coors, and to the states, where right-wing legislators can block