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Out-Of State Influence on NH and Project Veritas

Discusses how an invasion of New Hampshire by outside money and people is distorting our governance with a particular analysis of the voter fraud scandal caused by Project Veritas.



Jack Conaway, Neighbor

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New Hampshire is being invaded by outside money and people representing extreme ideologies that are alien to our citizens' values and disruptive to our quality of life. The Free State Project is recruiting 20,000 hard-core libertarians pledged to run for local and state offices after moving to NH. Once here and supported by outside money, they will attempt to swing the government further to the right, reduce taxes in our State that already has a volunteer government and minimal taxation, and implement policies that support social Darwinism and loaded handguns in every pocket.

Pro Gun New Hampshire and Gun Owners of NH, with NRA support and the new wave of Tea Party legislators, are turning our State's reasonable gun laws into the most lax in the nation.

The American Legislative Exchange Council (alec.org), a confederation of right wing state legislators supported by member fees from big corporations, creates and maintains a gigantic library of boilerplate legislative bills that undermine sensible regulations on corporations, attack consumer rights, and make it more difficult for entrepreneurs to start and maintain small businesses. The text of these bills are offered to State legislatures for

incorporation into their laws. ALEC recently removed the list of their corporate members from their website, but check out the membership of their Board of Directors.

In our last election, out-of-state political contributions distorted the results, most notably in the composition of our powerful Executive Council (nh.gov/council). In the coming elections, outside money will become even more problematic as national Super PACs with secret contributors will throw more money into local politics in addition to national elections.

The latest travesty of outside interference in NH is the attack on our voting system by the Veritas Project. Note that this "project" is a for-profit business. Typical of other political activist organizations with doublespeak titles, the Veritas Project has nothing to do with the truth. The project is run by James O'Keefe, a dirty politics trickster much worse than Karl Rove, known for his devious and illegal attacks on the ACORN service organization, National Public Radio, Planned Parenthood, state teachers unions and Medicaid workers. Prior to the NH Presidential Primary, his organization used recent obituaries to construct a list of deceased NH citizens. The project then sent operatives to NH polling places to request ballots for the deceased. Fortunately, they were exposed by an alert poll volunteer and shut down before they could create more damage.

This action supports the Republican Party's national campaign to change voter eligibility laws and make it more difficult for students, the poor and elderly to vote because of their political demographics. In 2011, legislation to require photo identification to vote was proposed in 20 US State legislatures. This campaign is analogous to poll taxes used by Southern States to exclude poor blacks from voting after the Civil War.

Understanding the NH voting scandal requires an understanding of The Veritas Project, its history and its methods of operation. This group attacks

non-profit groups that help poor people in the US, government processes and public unions. They typically take on phony disguises and roles in gaining access to the organizations, secretly make video or audio recordings of discussions, selectively edit the recordings to distort the meanings of their victims and release the copies of their productions through right wing media outlets. Distribution of these products is coordinated over a period of time to maintain media focus. Their activities are also coordinated with legislative efforts at Federal and State levels to cause maximum impact on pending legislation.

James O'Keefe received his training from, and worked for, the The Leadership Institute of Arlington, Virginia, a right wing “educational” organization that runs programs on implementing conservatism through government and the media. Former alumni and associates from these programs include Karl Rove, Grover Norquist, Ralph Reed, and Dr. No (Republican Senator Mitch McConnell of Michigan). O'Keefe was dropped from the institute when his project activities were disclosed. If continued by an employee, these activities would have canceled the institute's non-profit status and tax exemptions for its contributors.

Project Veritas attacked and destroyed the ACORN non-profit organization that served the country's poor. During discussions with the media, O'Keefe told a Washington Post reporter that their aim was to stop ACORN's aid to poor blacks and latinos in registering to vote. Investigation of Project Veritas in the ACORN case by California's Attorney General's Office determined that the illegally obtained recordings had been “severely edited” and there was no indication that ACORN workers had broken any laws or encouraged any criminal conduct. A separate investigation by the Government Accounting Office (GAO) indicated that there was no evidence that ACORN, or its related organizations, had mishandled any federal funds that they received. By the time these investigations were concluded, the US Legislature had canceled ACORN funding and the organization was forced to lay off its social workers


and close its offices.

Project Veritas then went on, using the same despicable tactics, to attack National Public Radio, Planned Parenthood and teachers' unions and Medicaid workers in several states. O'Keefe and colleagues, dressed as telephone repairmen, were also arrested while attempting to tap the phones of Democratic Senator Mary Landrieu in New Orleans at the beginning of another planned attack.

The interference of Project Veritas in our voting process was immediately used by Republican NH House Speaker William O'Brien to bolster his ridiculous contentions of voter fraud in NH. The NH Senate bill SB 318-FN, requiring a photo ID or identity verification affidavit for voters, is currently in committee. O'Brien is using Project Veritas antics to get a veto-proof margin for passage of voter photo identification legislation in the NH House.

The only voting fraud in NH was that performed by Project Veritas operatives. Future threats of votes from deceased citizens can completely be eliminated by volunteer poll workers. All that is needed is a check of obituary information against voter checklists on the day before an election.

Live Free or Die in New Hampshire has no meaning if we allow outside groups and money to manipulate our State governance with trickery, lies and fraud.

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