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THE CRYING NEED TO DE-FUND THE LEFT

The right of American citizens to lobby their government is guaranteed in the seldom-quoted last line of the First Amendment. It protects the right of all Americans "to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

But nowhere does our Constitution grant a right to lobby with the taxpayers' money. Elementary justice should tell us that, if special-interest groups use tax dollars to finance their lobbying, that would be unfairly discriminatory against other citizens who have contrary views.

U.S. News & World Report recently reported that the League of Women Voters "is making Reagan's New Federalism and the accompanying 1983 budget-cut proposals one of its top three lobbying targets." They surely have the right to lobby against the Reagan economic program, but on whose money? From 1977 to 1982, the League of Women Voters received $1,396,842 in grants of federal taxpayers' money.

The Sierra Club collected one million signatures calling for the firing of Interior Secretary James Watt. "We are declaring war on Wattism," said Joe Fontaine, the club's president. They have the right to lobby against Watt, but on whose money? From 1978 to 1981, the Sierra Club received $611,427 in grants of federal taxpayers' money.

This was supplemented by federal grants to other anti-Watt organizations. The National Audubon Society and its affiliates received $115,103; the National Wildlife Federation received $903,377; the Friends of the Earth received $31,345; and the Citizens Environmental Coalition Education Fund received $76,573.

Ralph Nadar conducts aggressive anti-business lobbying, which is his right. But on whose money? His center for Auto Safety got $70,958 from FTC intervenor grants, and his Public Interest Research Groups (PIRGs) received major help from tax-paid VISTA volunteers.

The Council on Foreign Relations, whose president is David Rockefeller, has been a longtime advocate of internationalist policies, nuclear disarmament, subsidized trade with Communist countries, and all efforts to submerge American sovereignty in some kind of world

organization. The National Endowment for the Humanities granted $500,000 in federal tax funds to the CFR.

Anti-nuke and phony "peace" lobbying groups are currently, like springtime in a popular song, "busting out all over." Is it really spontaneous grassroots pacifism? The Scientists Against Nuclear Energy Education Fund (SANE) received $105,000; the World Without War Council received $32,000; and the American Friends Service Committee received $183,804 from CETA and $150,000 from ACTION and the Department of Education.

On September 19, 1981, union and feminist advocates marched in Washington under the banner "Solidarity Day" to denounce the Reagan economic policies. Several of the participating organizations received federal tax funds, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting spent $148,000 to give the day extensive national news coverage.

Planned Parenthood works openly for abortion and "social change" and against parental notification. On whose money? In 1980, Planned Parenthood Federation of America received $12.8 million in federal tax funds, and its local affiliates got another $58 million.

Homosexuals have become very politically active in elections and lobbying, as is their right. But on whose money? The HHS Department gave $18,416 in tax dollars to New Ways Ministry to study the "coming-out process and coping strategies of gay women." HHS also gave $167,724 to the Center for Homosexual Education, Evaluation and Research to study "civil liberties and sexual orientation" and $65,285 to the University of Southern California to study "successful heterosexual and homosexual men."

CETA gave the Gay and Lesbian Community Services Center in Los Angeles a $640,000 grant to provide "education about gay lifestyles and gay people's problems." CETA funded the Seattle Gay Youth Summer Theatre Project in order to produce a show called "Lavender Horizons." CETA funded the National Gay Task Force's Public Education programs to provide surveys on patterns of discrimination faced by gay people. CETA gave $41,000 to women to perform in a nude show called "The Leaping Lesbian Follies."

Those who want to know more about special-interest groups feeding at the public trough can read chapter and verse in the current month's issue of <u>Conservative Digest</u>. It lists all the above and much, much more. It proves that the chief thing wrong with Ronald Reagan's budget cuts is that he didn't cut nearly enough.