

Playing ketchup

Recipients of Heinz money are making a strong pitch for John Kerry, says Christopher Horner

On Jan. 24, before the first vote was cast in New Hampshire's Democrat primary, the League of Conservation Voters (LCV) endorsed Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass., for president. Weeks earlier, in an entirely unrelated matter, the Heinz Family Foundation provided an "unrestricted-use" grant of a quarter million dollars to a group represented on the LCV board.

Sen. Kerry is married to the very wealthy Teresa Heinz — Teresa Heinz Kerry in this campaign year — who also sits on the board of numerous foundation and advocacy groups. For example, she chairs the board of trustees of the one half of the Heinz Family Foundation (the Howard Heinz Endowment), and sits on the board of the other half (the Vira I. Heinz Endowment).

The tax-exempt advocacy group LCV is expressly nonpartisan. Regardless, the top half of its Web site is dedicated to the endorsement of Sen. Kerry. The bottom half of this page is dedicated to attacking the president's State of the Union speech, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Bush administration in general.

Other groups supported by Heinz largesse include Environmental Defense, which, according to the Capital Research Center, received nearly \$1.5 million from various Heinz foundations between 1995 and 2000. CRC cites Ted Turner's Tides Foundation — a clearinghouse for foundations to funnel money to radical groups with a degree of separation — as receiving well over \$2 million from Heinz foundations over the same period.

Other repeat beneficiaries include the Brookings Institution and the Earth Island Institute.

The latter is a remarkable case study in what is funded by America's elites, the Heinzes included. EII is best known for its Sept. 14, 2001, statement on its Web site, "U.S. Responds to Terrorist Attacks with Self-Righteous Arrogance."

Steeped in self-righteous arrogance itself, the screed insists that the Sept. 11 attacks were not an act of war; EII sheds a tear instead for these oppressed peoples communicating their anger at the root cause of a capitalist, globalist society the only way they knew how. Theirs "was an act of anger, desperation and indignation," reasoned the Heinz-funded EII.

"This was not an 'attack on all American people.'" You see, mostly Pentagon and "multinational-financial-empire" types died, making the attack "not the sort of flat-out terrorism that tar-



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Democrat presidential hopeful John Kerry and wife Teresa Heinz celebrate primary win in New Hampshire.

gets random innocents at a disco or a beach."

So, Sen. Kerry is married to an elitist whose radical pet projects occasionally get off the leash.

That is hardly news. It is fair to anticipate over the coming months, however, that each of these Heinz-funded groups will coincidentally make its own pitch for a Kerry presidency, though possibly not as fawningly as LCV. If it's too overt, you see, it gives the appearance of employing taxpayer-subsidized wealth to influence elections.

The various Heinz outfits have written checks to LCV for some years now. With no apparent sense of irony, LCV's Web site also quotes from the hard-left American Prospect: "Teresa Heinz — widow of ketchup heir Sen. John Heinz, R-Pa., and Kerry's wife since 1995 — is worth an estimated three-quarters of a billion, and Kerry has not been shy about dipping into that fortune when he's had to."

In Kerry's pursuit of the presidency, however, initial FEC comments indicated that Ms. Heinz's fortune is off-limits to his campaign.

Typically, rules allow a candidate to utilize one-half of jointly held assets and even the entirety of jointly held bank accounts. Heinz-Kerry-to-Kerry transfers, however, would fall outside the permissible \$2,000 individual-donation cap unless they could be demonstrated as part of a pattern of giving that predated his candidacy.

It is on this basis that the campaign sought early on to preempt questions of his wife's wealth — which also reminds voters why Kerry's populism rings rather tinny and staged — by claiming her money is off-limits. Her ability to direct money, however, even to otherwise permissible causes, is still subject to criticism should it appear designed to influence the election. A quid pro quo involving a tax-exempt organization, if it could be proved, would be im-

permissible at any time — not just in a campaign season.

Like Pew, Rockefeller, Ford, and others, the family of Heinz foundations and advocacy groups are merely more in a sadly growing list of endowments dedicated to financing agendas that, if they'd held sway at an earlier date, would have precluded amassing the original fortunes. Whatever the motivation of Teresa Kerry, the League of Conservation Voters, and other left-leaning pressure groups, voters and the FEC would be wise to recall at all times the Heinz connection when these "independent" voices make their political desires known.

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