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Active measures

By Frank J. Gaffney Jr.

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When voters are asked to evaluate their choices for president next November, they will have to weigh carefully the temperament, judgment and instincts of the candidate. Nowhere will these qualities be of greater consequence than in the execution of his duties as commander in chief.

Massachusetts Democrat John Kerry's long record of extremely liberal Senate votes on national security-related matters offers ample grounds for concerns on all three scores.

Unfortunately for Mr. Kerry, those concerns will only grow as the electorate learns more over the coming months about the temperament, judgment and instincts his wife, Teresa Heinz Kerry, brings to such matters, as reflected in her choices during years of multimillion-dollar philanthropy.

Of particular concern is one of the beneficiaries of substantial largess from foundations controlled by the would-be first lady: The San Francisco-based Tides Foundation and a spinoff called the Tides Center. These entities in turn help distribute funds to and operate as clearinghouses for policy-networking and coordination between a veritable Who's Who of radical leftist organizations. The recipients share a hostility to what most Americans understand to be our country's security interests and the capabilities needed to protect them.

According to publicly available information, in recent years Mrs. Heinz Kerry's foundations have given at least \$5.9 million to these entities. While a Kerry campaign spokesman insists such funds were earmarked for environmental causes, as the New York Post observed in a caustic editorial on Tuesday about Teresa's philanthropy, "money is fungible." And money entrusted to the Tides organizations for distribution routinely found its way into the hands of people pursuing more than merely hard-line "green" agendas.

For example, as Ben Johnson observed in an article last month in FrontPageMagazine.com titled "Teresa Heinz Kerry: bag lady for the radical left," beneficiaries of some \$300 million distributed over the years by the Tides' operations include:

"Rabid antiwar demonstrators, antitrade demonstrators, domestic Islamist organizations, pro-terrorists legal groups, environmentalists, abortion partisans, extremist homosexual activists and open-borders advocates."

More troubling still is that the investment by Mrs. Heinz Kerry in organizations providing large sums -- and, in some cases, probably life-support -- to such groups is paying off for her husband's campaign.

Notably, when President Bush unveiled his opening salvo of political advertisements containing fleeting images of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, a Tides-associated outfit called "September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows" led a caucus of press-amplified denunciations of their exploitative "insensitivity" to the victims.

The political impact was all the more extraordinary since, as The Post reported March 9, "[Peaceful Tomorrows] admits [it] has only a few dozen members and represents relatives of no more than 1 percent of the 9/11 victims."

When the Soviets ran left-wing influence operations, they called such things "active measures" -- a term that described the spectrum from low-level propaganda and

disinformation to covert operations, all designed to subvert opponents and advance one's own agenda.

Themes that benefit Candidate Kerry's run for the White House also have been promoted by far more sophisticated, visible and better-funded active measures campaigns run by Tides-supported operations like MoveOn.org and International ANSWER, two of the prime-movers behind opposition to President Bush's War on Terror.

This is not to say Mr. Kerry or even his wife are directly running the operations supported by one of her favorite charities. Yet, as Ben Johnson trenchantly observes, "The grant-making institutions of the left and their feverish recipients ultimately form an amorphous, leftist entity.

"One never needs to search very far to find connections between a leftist foundation and extreme advocacy groups. Teresa Heinz Kerry, George Soros, Bill Moyers and the Ford Foundation fund the Tides Foundation/Center; Tides funds the National Lawyers Guild, the Council on American Islamic Relations, MoveOn.org and United for Peace and Justice; those organizations then unite in fluid coalitions to protest against their common political enemies (Republicans).

"Ultimately, their representatives end up on Bill Moyers' PBS programs or active within the Democratic campaigns of their fund-raisers. Between now and the election, these organizations will run constant interference for the Democratic presidential nominee. ... : They will march en masse against the Bush administration again and again; they will file more lawsuits against the administration's Homeland Security measures, decry any effective response to terrorism, claim the United States is guilty of slaughtering Iraqi civilians and petition leftist judges to open America's borders to Islamist terrorists.

"After they help his election, President Kerry will be indebted to them. And then they will insist he begin implementing their political agenda."

Unless and until Mr. Kerry formally disassociates himself from radical leftist groups and agendas like those supported by his wife, it is not unreasonable to conclude his public record on defense and foreign policy matters is only part of the problem with his bid to become commander in chief.

For such a renunciation to be credible, however, it should come now -- not toward the end of a campaign influenced by the active measures of his wife's political allies and philanthropic beneficiaries.

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