

Hang Down Your Head Tom Steyer

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It is the only inescapable truth, we are all going to die, and nobody can buy their way out of the last act.

Tom Steyer is a progressive billionaire who puts his money where his mouth is on myriad political causes. Rumor has it he is considering a run for Governor of California, a perfect clone to current Governor Jerry "Moonbeam" Brown. Tom Steyer made his money on Wall Street investing in companies like Exxon he now vilifies as an environmental activist.

Tom Steyer proved the shrill voices that condemned the 2010 Supreme Court (SCOTUS) decision in "Citizens United" were groundless. In 2015-16 Tom Steyer donated \$89,544,744 to Super PACs, political action committees, more than any other individual or organization (according to data from The Center for Responsive Politics). Steyer donated millions more directly to progressive candidates' campaigns, losers like Hillary Clinton, so his generosity makes him as well-liked among Democrats as Harvey Weinstein... without the sexual perversion baggage.

John Paul Stevens was a member of SCOTUS when it issued the 5-4 Citizens United decision. He wrote a scathing 90 page dissenting opinion, arguing against the notion that companies political spending is protected under the First Amendment. He retired shortly after that, and has since suggested a constitutional amendment should be passed to remedy the error of his colleagues. The progressive chorus against Citizens United lamented long and loud that our political landscape would forever be ruined, dominated by those evil job creating corporations.

But Tom Steyer and like-minded progressives saved the nation from such a fate. Between them, Tom Steyer, Michael Bloomberg (\$23,561,624) and George Soros (who pitched in to Super PACs with a paltry \$19,239,693), donated more than \$120M to various political Super PACs, virtually all of them Democrats. It warms my conservative heart to report that all but a handful of those candidates suffered the same fate as Hillary... losing with little or no grace. Money, it seems, is not the determining factor the losers hoped it would be.

We have had two Presidential elections since the Citizens United case, as well as four Congressional election cycles, and the dire predictions by progressives of corporate domination have proved not just inaccurate but utterly without foundation. The other clear evidence the data demonstrates is that unions, mostly public employee unions, are the largest organizational force in campaign finance.

The National Educational Association (NEA), the public school teachers union, gave \$23,773,966 to Super PAC's, again, virtually all of it to Democrats. The Service Employees International Union (SEIU) gave \$23,274,845. The dues of federal government employees are a massive funding source for Democrats. It is interesting to note that the Citizens United case would have exempted unions from the constraints imposed on corporations, which makes no legal or common sense.

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So Tom Steyer, Michael Bloomberg and George Soros, etcetera, are free to donate whatever sums of money they are so inclined to their progressive friends. In fact, let's hope they continue pouring good money after bad, perhaps they might run out of money and be consigned to the middle class... wouldn't that be sweet. Failing such karma, perhaps they should acknowledge the bombastic rhetoric and absurd predictions by the progressives was dead wrong.

This is not to suggest there are not also wealthy Republican donors. Sheldon and wife Miriam Adelson donated \$77,900,000... which shadows Tom Steyer's largess. The bottom line is, as a class, individual donors gave significantly more money and, one presumes, had more influence on political campaigns than did business corporations.

Tom Steyer recently upped the ante; he offered to fund any Congressional candidate in 2018 who pledged to impeach Donald Trump if elected. That is the sort of lunatic idea that makes progressives sound like they are mentally unstable. Theoretically that is possible, but the probability of that happening is so remote as to classify the suggestion as idle chatter. The Founding Fathers made impeachment a difficult process for good reason, like they did creating the Electoral College...to insure that sovereignty would not become the domain of the disgruntled few.

Tom Steyer is at liberty to do what he wants with his money. He does so surely knowing that, like Tom Dooley, he is "bound to die." And he will go to his maker like we all will, judged by our deeds not our bank accounts.

David W. Thompson worked in government, education and the non-profit sector for more than forty years. A graduate of Westminster College and Harvard University, he resides in Easley, SC. You can follow him on his blog, Smokealarms2015.com.