

Environmentalists Change Tactics In Effort To Silence Opponents

The public's image of environmental groups has long been one of "little old ladies in tennis shoes" who are committed to protecting such things as baby seals. The public perceives their actions to be admirable, and believes they will have little adverse impact on the lives of the public at large. That image, while still prevalent in the minds of many Americans, doesn't really describe the environmental activists of today, who are well funded and politically connected within the highest levels of government.

Environmental activist organizations' political influence comes from their ability to raise large sums of money allowing them to play a major role in electing liberal policymakers. President Obama is an example of a political figure who had the support of environmental organizations in his elections in 2008 and again in 2012.

The nine largest environmental groups reported in 2012 to the IRS on their 990 tax returns \$530 million in revenues and \$978 million in net assets. This stockpile of cash has allowed groups - such as the Sierra Club, National Resource Defense Council, the Environmental Defense Fund, and Greenpeace - to hire lawyers, lobbyists and public relations specialists to advance their causes.

Most recently, they have been involved in advocating policies that would restrict the future use of oil and gas and advance support for climate change policies. The Obama administration has been able to implement regulations designed to increase the cost of operating oil and gas facilities in hopes of making solar and wind more cost competitive.

Implementation of regulations that increase the cost of operation is burdensome, but Obama's Department of Justice took it to the next level when they brought criminal charges against employees of companies involved with an explosion on a drilling rig in the Gulf of Mexico, which was operated by BP. None of the employees were convicted, but each defendant had to endure years of struggle and expense to prove their innocence.

Recently, left-wing environmentalists have even conducted a letter writing campaign to science museums stating that the museums should reject any funding from individuals or corporations that have a connection to fossil fuels.

"When some of the biggest contributors to climate change and funders of misinformation on climate science sponsor exhibitions in museums of science and natural history, they undermine public confidence in the validity of the institutions responsible for transmitting scientific knowledge," a letter from dozens of climate scientists and environmental groups stated. "This corporate philanthropy comes at too high a cost."

Silencing the debate on climate change through intimidation is another tactic.

Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.) has called on the Justice Department to bring charges against those who disagree with his belief about global warming. Attorney General Lynch testified before Congress in March that the matter has been referred to the FBI "to consider whether or not it meets the criteria for what we could take action on." She was referring to investigations into Exxon Mobil's funding of climate change studies. The attorneys general in California, New York and the Virgin Islands have already initiated investigations.

Intimidation and bullying tactics have become frequent tools of the Obama administration and environmental extremist as they try to silence those who disagree with their perception about global warming.



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