

“Show Me the Money”



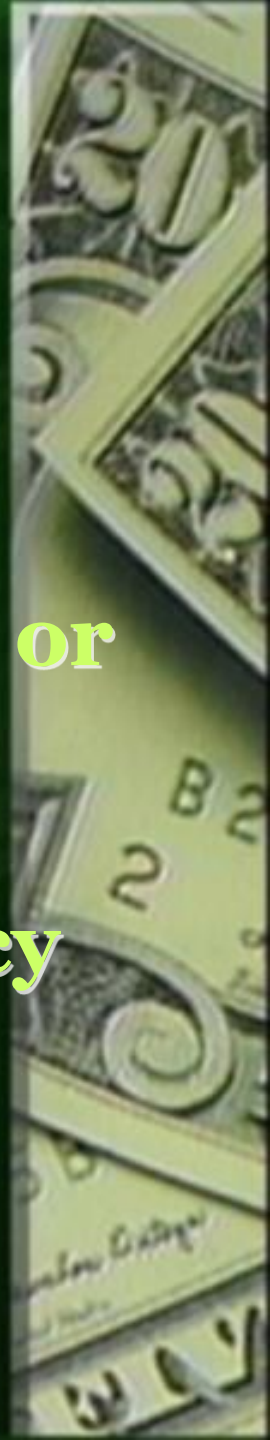
Campaign Finance Chapter 7, Section 3



What are Interest Groups?



- **Organizations of people sharing a common interest or goal that seek to influence government policy and elections**



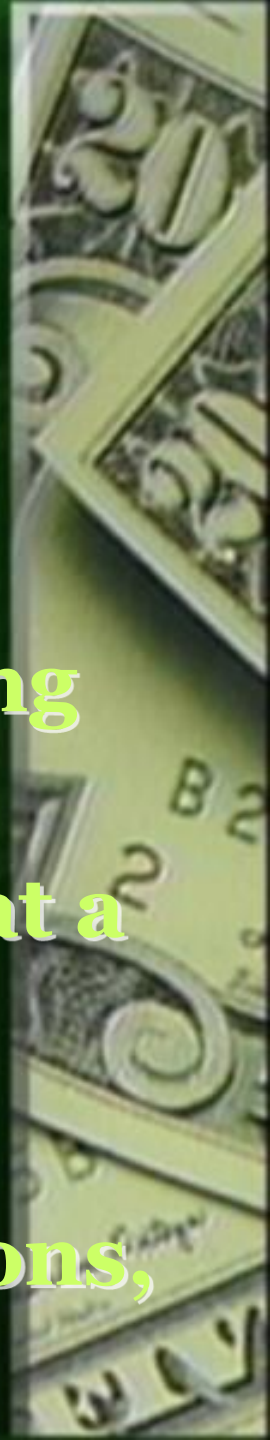
The Role of Interest Groups in the Political Process

- Inform public about issues and candidates
- Grassroots organizing
- Recruit and endorse candidates
- Form Political Action Committees (PACs)
- Contribute money to campaigns
- Sponsor “Issue Ads”



So you want to run for president...where's the money coming from?

- **Me! I'm rich!**
- **The Federal Government: matching funds**
- **Individual Contributors – a little at a time**
- **PACs – a little more at a time**
- **SuperPACs- \$\$ friends, corporations, unions, whoever!**





Hard Money:

Campaign contributions regulated and limited by the federal government that are given directly to a candidate

But there are limits to how much and who can give....☹



Political Action Committee (PAC):

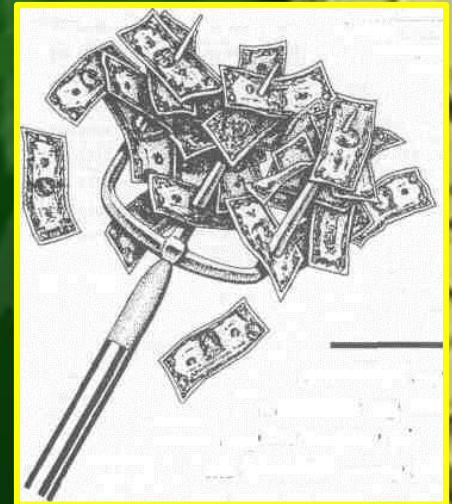
Fund-raising organization that represents interest groups in the political process.

A “middle-man” for corporations and others to get money to candidates.

But there are still limits on direct contributions.....☹️

Soft Money:

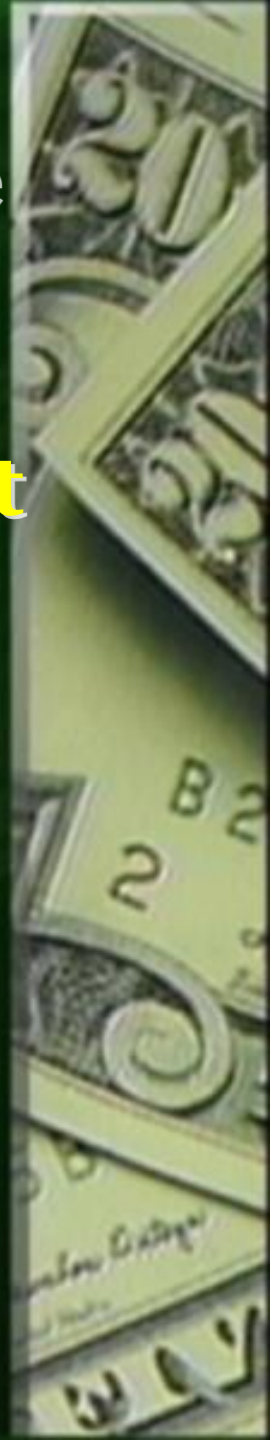
- Contributions to parties (supposedly) for generic “party building” activities (ex: get-out-the-vote drives, bumper stickers, yard signs, and “issue ads”)
- Can't be used to endorse a specific candidate



Lots of Efforts over Time to Regulate Money in Campaigns

1974 – Federal Election Campaign Act
Set limits on donations & spending
Established the FEC to regulate campaigns (Federal Election Commission)

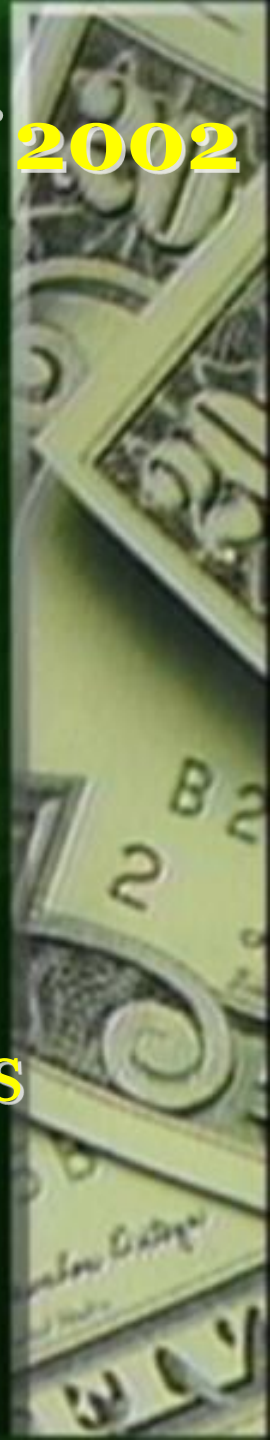
1976 – Buckley vs Valeo
Can't limit personal spending b/c of the First Amendment



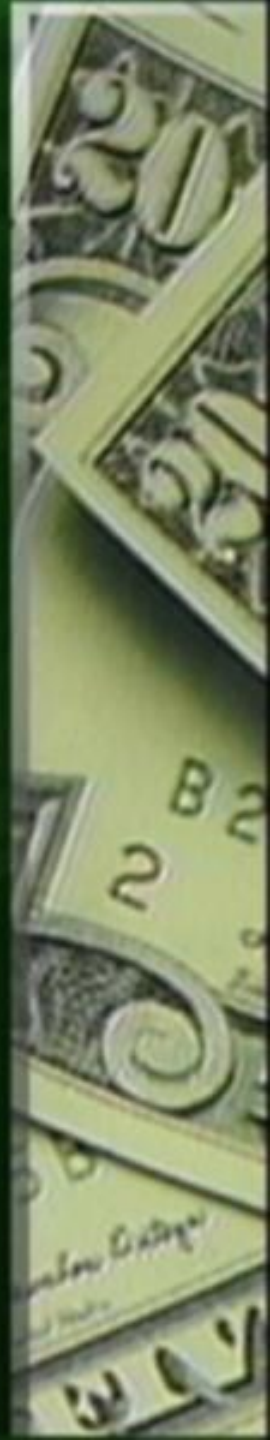
Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 a.k.a. McCain-Feingold Bill



- Ban on national parties and officeholders raising and spending “soft money”
- “Stand by your ad” provision



*But we can still
always find a
“loophole” to
get around the
rules*





527 Groups

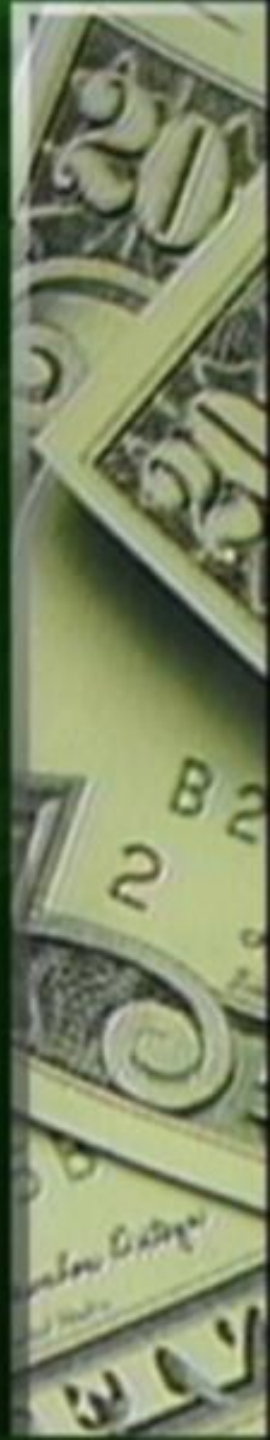
- Tax-exempt organizations created to raise money for political activities
- Not subject to FEC disclosure rules (dark money)
- Advocacy groups try to influence federal elections through voter mobilization efforts and so-called issue ads that tout or criticize a candidate's record.

501(c) Groups

- Nonprofit, tax-exempt interest groups that can engage in varying levels of political activity
- Not subject to FEC disclosure rules.



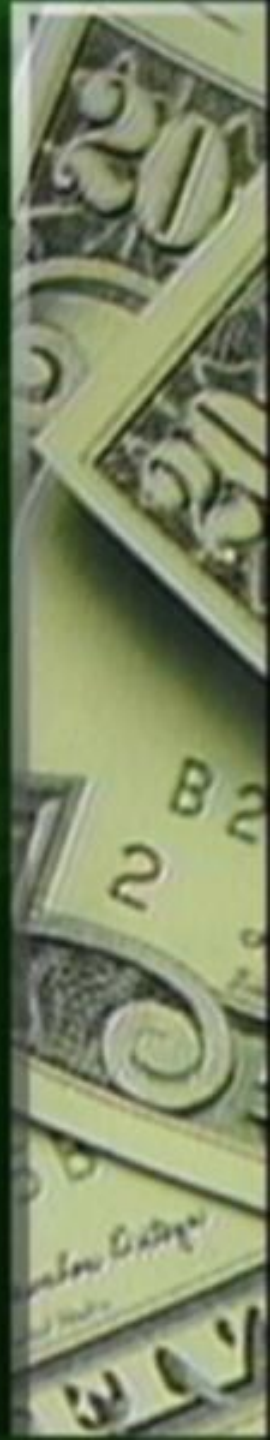
*But isn't
spending money
the same as
"speech"?*



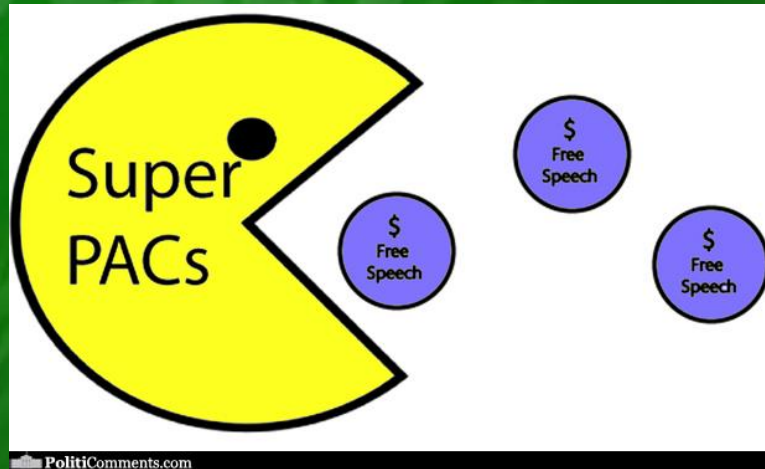
Citizens United vs. FEC

2010

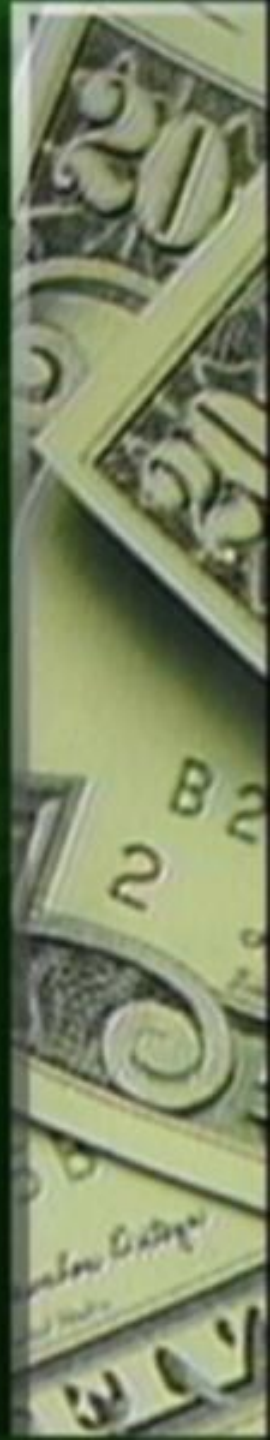
- **Political spending is protected speech under the 1st Amendment. Basically, allowed unlimited spending on campaigns.**
- **Gov't can't keep corporations or unions from spending money to support or denounce individual candidates in elections**
- **Kept the ban on direct contributions to candidates.**



Super PACs



- **Super PACs may raise and spend unlimited sums of money in order to advocate for or against political candidates.**
- **Super PACs are prohibited from donating money directly to political candidates.**



Individuals

PACs

Corporations

Unions

501(c3) Nonprofits

501(c4) Nonprofits

501(c6) Trade groups



Candidate committee

Political action committee

SuperPAC*

501(c3) nonprofit

**501(c4) nonprofit
501(c6) trade group**

Obama for America
Mitt Romney for
President

American Hospital
Association PAC
Michigan Beer and
Wine Wholesalers
Federal PAC
International
Longshoremen's
Association AFL-CIO
Committee on

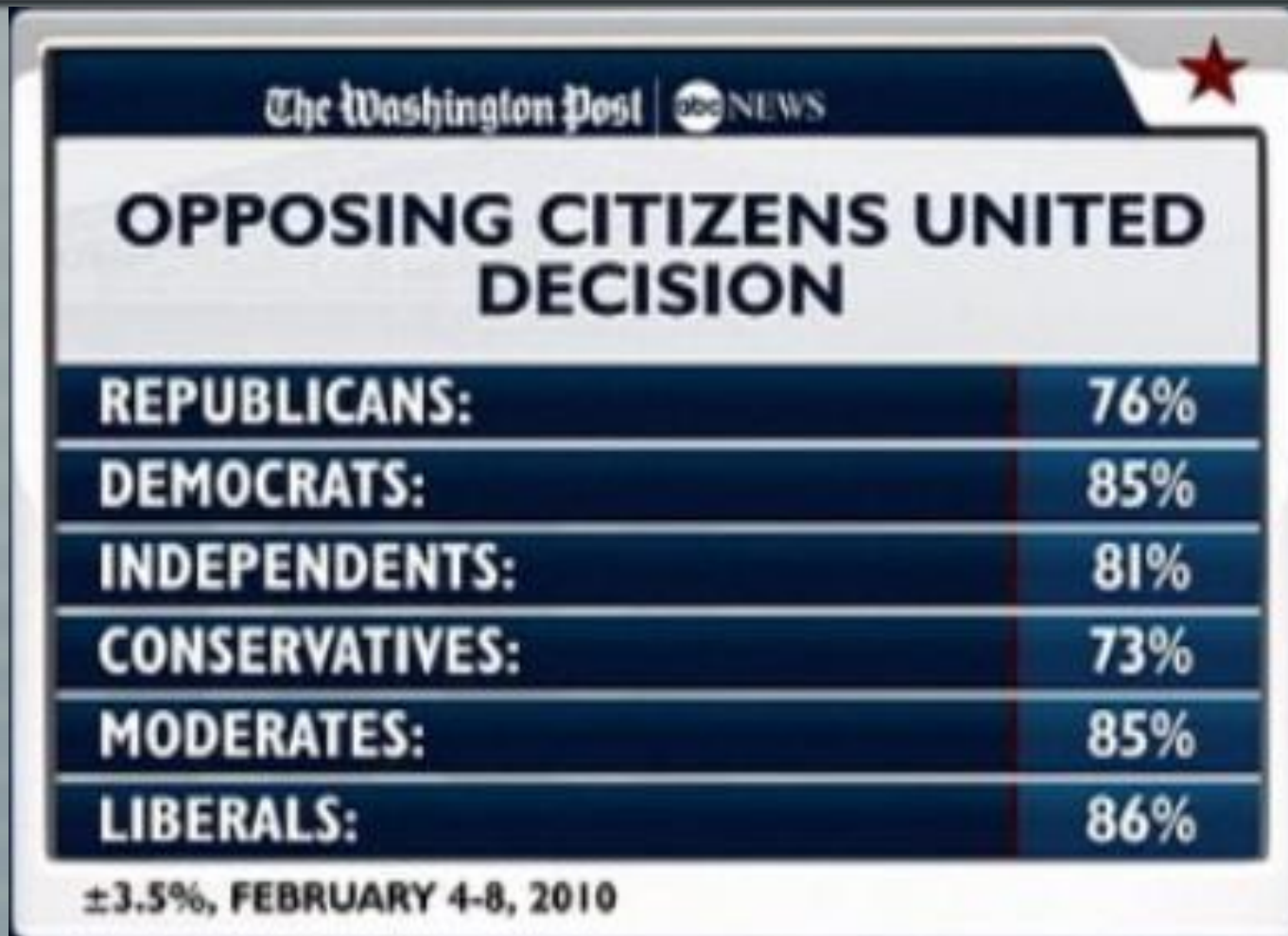
Restore Our Future
American Crossroads
Priorities USA Action

American Legislative
Exchange Council
Sierra Club Foundation
Americans For
Prosperity Foundation

Crossroads GPS
Americans for Prosperity
U.S. Chamber of
Commerce
Priorities USA
Sierra Club



Citizens United Public Opinion Poll



Source: <http://www.workingclassheroes.me/?p=1499>

Analyzing Political Cartoons

For each of the following cartoons:

a) Describe what's going on in the political cartoon (Who? What? When? Where?)

b) Identify any symbols portrayed in the cartoon and analyze what they represent.

c) What is the artist's message in the cartoon?
What do you think?

d) Explain what this cartoon tells us about special interest money in political campaigns after the *Citizens United* decision.

Political Cartoon #1



Source: <http://theragblog.blogspot.com>

Political Cartoon #2



Source: jobsanger.blogspot.com

Political Cartoon #3



Source: www.citizenvox.org

Political Cartoon #4

ABLE TO CHANGE THE COURSE OF DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS WITH A SINGLE CHECK!

SUPERPAC

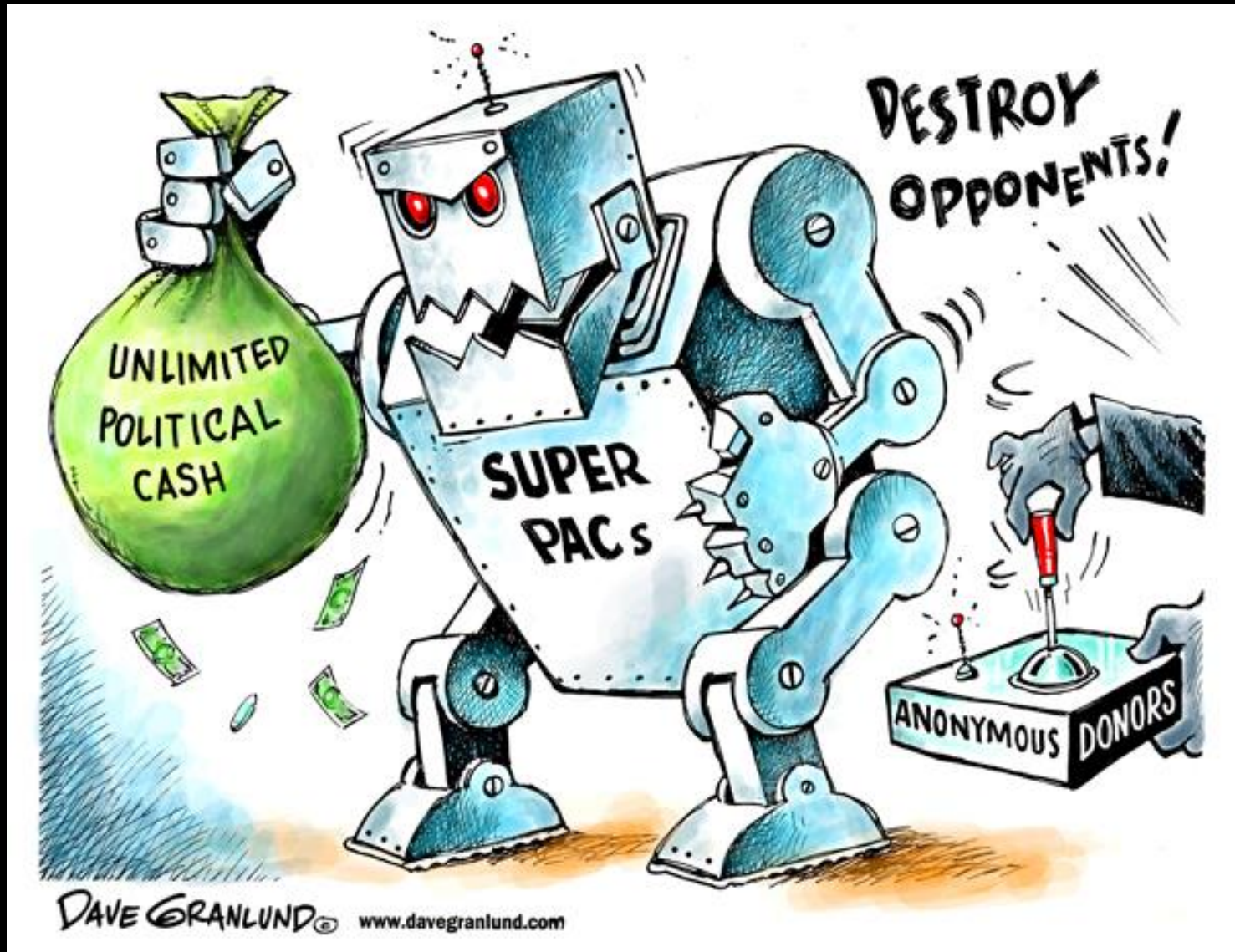
EXCELLENT!



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APOLDBIES TO
MATT GREENING
& DC COMICS
ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH caglecartoons.com

Source: thecomixnews.com

Political Cartoon #5



Source: unitedrepublic.org