

How Lobbyists Have Subverted and Damaged Democratic Government in Both Westminster and Washington

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“Congress shall make no law ... prohibiting ... or abridging the right of the people peaceably ... to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”

Lobbying has become the (paid) act of advocacy of a vested interest of an individual or group that is or can be affected by the decisions of government or other authority. The practice of lobbying is specifically protected by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution as it was considered essential to the democratic functioning of government, at that time i.e. prior to the advent of computers and means of mass communication.

Unfortunately, lobbyists today serve a specific minority cause or interest group often to the exclusion of the majority. They are unelected and therefore not representative of majority opinion.

The act of lobbying has become a highly paid and organised political endeavour that pressures, persuades, cajoles and even threatens government officials and elected representatives of the people to act in a way that profits the interests of minority sections of society and/or industry often to the exclusion and detriment of the majority. Furthermore, the level of influence a specific lobbying group has over the legislative process is directly proportional to its resources of time and money that it can expend upon achieving its legislative goal. In certain cases, those resources can run into millions, if not billions, of dollars, as evidenced recently by the use of casino-generated funds being used to successfully achieve a political goal. And that is a dangerous injury to the democratic process.

The act of lobbying that is protected in the US by the Constitution has been used to subvert democratic government to the extent that in specific areas, democracy has been overridden by the illegitimate use of legacy legislation.

Examples of some existing lobbies active in either Brussels, Washington or Westminster, and having a powerful influence upon democratic government, include:

- National Rifle Association of America - the Gun Lobby
- AIPAC - Pro Israel Lobby
- Big Pharma
- The Defence Industry / Aerospace / Aircraft and Arms Manufacturing
- Agribusiness
- British Bankers & Investment Managers

- AARP
- Oil & Gas lobby
- European Israel lobby/ CFI/ BICOM/ EFI/ ECI/ FII
- Tech Lobby
- Mining Industry
- Financial Lobby / Wall Street / City of London

etc etc

Lobbies also exist to modify, change or sometimes to distort public opinion either by overt or covert means and are today employed by foreign entities to influence elections in many parts of the world. So far, this activity is mainly unregulated.

There is a contention that both the US Presidential election that made Donald Trump, POTUS, and the referendum that decided BREXIT in the United Kingdom, were heavily influenced by the effect of electronic lobbying. These allegations are as yet unproven.

However, the undue influence of certain foreign politicians upon the US Congress is the blatant and clear result of so-called legitimate lobbying. This has had, and is currently exerting, a profound effect upon American foreign policy that is not conducive to global peace.

It is clear, therefore, that the unrestricted power of specific lobbyists upon government is detrimental to democracy and highly damaging to society.

Lobbying should be officially, and heavily, regulated by legislation in Washington, London and the EU.

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