

The PUBLIC *i*

Unanswered Questions the Presidential Candidates Don't Want You to Ask

The Center for Public Integrity, in writing and researching its book, The Buying of the President, sought answers to many key questions regarding the backgrounds and past relationships of the 1996 presidential candidates with special interests. However many of those questions remain unanswered because the candidates either never fully addressed them or simply ignored them.

The following is a list of questions, with brief background material about the candidates (drawn from The Buying of the President) which the candidates refused to answer. We believe the voters have a right to know the answers to these questions, questions whose answers we believe may be immensely helpful to understanding the character and background of the men who wish to be president.

However there is one issue which we believe it is important for all of the candidates to answer: Can candidates raise millions of dollars from specific industries, companies, individuals and not be beholden to those interests? What is your response to the assertion that money buys access to power?

President Bill Clinton

Candidate Bill Clinton promised to change Washington's "business as usual," but President Bill Clinton and his administration have come under fire for their close relationship with special interests which have given millions of dollars to Clinton's campaigns, legal defense fund and the Democratic National Committee. For example, a series of relationships with companies and executives who have given large amounts of money to the DNC resulted in those companies traveling on diplomatic trade missions with Commerce Secretary Ronald Brown — trips which oftentimes yielded multi-million dollar contracts for the companies.

The following questions address specific
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Lamar Alexander

Former Tennessee governor Lamar Alexander projects a down-home, average Joe image by campaigning in his red and black flannel shirt, but Alexander has made himself a millionaire by engaging in business deals with close friends who have also been generous campaign contributors to Alexander throughout his career. Additionally, Alexander's net worth, after having served in public office, has increased 300 percent, the largest increase of all the 1996 presidential candidates between 1984 and 1994.

The questions that follow generally concern how Alexander boosted his financial portfolio in recent years with the help of several close friends, and specific questions
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Patrick Buchanan

Television commentator Patrick Buchanan has made a career out of campaigning against U.S. policies of pursuing a more global economy, particularly through major trade agreements like NAFTA and GATT. Buchanan has also campaigned against large corporate powers.

The questions below explore what appear to be potential contradictions between Buchanan's rhetoric and his actions:

1) Richard Allen, a former Reagan White House aide, now serves as one of your campaign advisors in spite of the fact that he earned thousands of dollars as a foreign

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Sen. Robert Dole

Sen. Robert Dole, considered one of Washington's consummate insiders, has a long history of being the deal-maker who knows how to make things work in the nation's capital. Along with that status, Dole has also developed and nurtured relation-
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S P E C I A L I S S U E

OCCASIONALLY THE CENTER WILL PUBLISH A SPECIAL ISSUE
OF THE PUBLIC *i* IN AN EFFORT TO PROVIDE A COMPREHENSIBLE RECORD OF
CERTAIN EVENTS.

Clinton

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relationships the president or members of his administration have had with various monied interests:

1) Why have you been publicly silent about revelations that the Democratic National Committee distributed a brochure offering the party's most generous donors several benefits including dinner with the president? What is your position on this type of fundraising?

2) Why has your Inaugural Committee refused to release lender/donor names and amounts? And how do you characterize the unprecedented success of the committee, which had a \$9.7 million surplus?

3) On September 29, 1994, you signed the Fair Trade in Financial Services Act into law, a measure which no one pushed harder for than NationsBank and its president Hugh McColl, who told shareholders that the law would save NationsBank \$50 million a year. Two weeks later, the cash-strapped Democratic National Committee received a \$3.5 million line of credit from NationsBank at a favorable interest rate. How do you respond to those who see this as a quid pro quo? Did McColl discuss the matter with you or your staff?

4) How do you respond to assertions that your administration has pursued and "serviced" the American business community more aggressively and more systematically than any other previous administration, and that yours is a "franchise presidency?"

5) Keeping in mind your 1992 campaign pledge to put people first, how do you respond to Time magazine calling your \$32 million "people's inaugural" a "multimillion-dollar corporate sponsorfest?"

6) After donating hundreds of thousands of dollars to the DNC, several major companies were given seats on diplomatic trade missions with Commerce Secretary Ronald Brown — the former DNC chairman — where companies consequently netted international contracts worth billions. What is your answer to those who charge that your administration sells access to the highest bidder?

7) Despite his pledge in 1992 to support the creation of a publicly-funded information superhighway, Vice President Al Gore in 1993 reversed his position and advocated private funding of the superhighway. Within two days of the flip-flop, the DNC received \$132,000 from major telecommunications companies. Why did the DNC change its stance?

8) You have had financial dealings with James McDougal, formerly of the Madison Guaranty Savings and Loan in Arkansas. How much money has McDougal raised for your campaigns for governor and president? Why have you and Mrs. Clinton been less than forthcoming about the Whitewater affair and less than responsive to the questions from Congress about your dealings with McDougal and about any attempt by members of your administration to deflect investigation, or cover up actions related to Whitewater?

9) How much have you and/or Mrs. Clinton dissembled with respect to the matter commonly referred to as "Travelgate," the actions taken early in your administration to change the personnel in the White House Travel Office? How were any of those actions related to a political supporter of yours, Harry Thomason, his charter company and travel business? Also, how would Thomason's business have benefitted from a change in the White House Travel Office staff?

10) How much money has Thomason or his wife, Linda Bloodworth-Thomason, contributed, including in-kind contributions, to your various electoral campaigns and causes over your career?

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Alexander

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about certain relationships with special interests:

- 1) How many “billable hours” did you amass in 1994 and 1995 at the Baker law firm on behalf of your clients and how many days did you physically work in the Nashville law office?
- 2) How often did you meet with the chairman of the Sharp Corporation, Mr. Tsuji, or his Japanese corporate representatives in 1994 and 1995? Have you received money from the Sharp Corporation for consulting, advising, attending meetings, giving speeches, or any other purpose? If so, what were the amounts of money, including travel expenditures, received?
- 3) The Center for Public Integrity has been told that in the fall of 1994 you may have met with Japanese government officials from the Ministry of International Trade and Industry as well as from the Japanese External Trade Organization, in Tennessee. What was the purpose of the meeting? Have you ever received any money — including travel reimbursement — from Japanese government or corporate sources?
- 4) Your personal net worth soared during your public service — an increase of some 300 percent between 1984 and 1994 — more than any other major 1996 presidential candidate. How do you explain it? Should public officials enrich themselves from the contacts they’ve made in government service, even if it is entirely legal?
- 5) What was the purpose of the Republican Exchange Satellite Network other than to promote and raise money for your presidential campaign? You yourself have said that RESN gave you a chance to “create a political and financial base.” Why were the contributions to the group — which was staffed by your former aides, and Republican Fund and Department of Education staffers who worked for you — kept secret?
- 6) Why did the Alexander Committee continue to raise money after you won your second term as Tennessee governor and could not run again? Can you explain why some of your biggest career patrons signed and sent letters to 150 business executives soliciting \$1,000 on your behalf as a going-away gift when you left office?
- 7) Why did you use leftover campaign funds to pay for personal trips to China, Super Bowl XVI and other assorted gifts?
- 8) How do you explain turning a \$1 investment — for the option to buy a Tennessee newspaper — into \$620,000 worth of stock in the Gannett Newspaper Company? How did it come to pass that you, then-Tennessee governor, received that option?
- 9) How do you justify spearheading a public works project to construct an interstate highway that would intersect property you owned, Blackberry Farm, at the southern edge of the Smoky Mountains? And considering the fact that you attempted to convince the publisher of a Tennessee newspaper to kill an expose on the matter, how would you characterize your behavior on this matter?
- 10) How do you respond to assertions that there was a conflict of interest when, serving as education secretary, you announced a bill which would allow federal funds to be parceled out to parents to pay for their children to attend public or private school, a policy which could ultimately benefit your longtime friend and business partner, Chris Whittle? How often had you and Whittle privately discussed such a program?
- 11) How do you reconcile your history of making a large amount of money from small investments with a great deal of help from political insiders, with your campaign claims that you are an outsider who doesn’t subscribe to old fashioned politics as usual?

Sen. Richard Lugar

Viewed by many as one of the most thoughtful, though not particularly charismatic U.S. senators, Sen. Richard Lugar has not been immune to the influences of special interest groups, particularly those from his home state of Indiana.

The questions which follow generally concern the relationships Lugar has developed with a small group of special interests, particularly with Eli Lilly, an Indianapolis-based pharmaceutical company:

- 1) Since many Eli Lilly/Lilly Foundation employees have left the company to work for you and vice versa, how do you respond to those who say that there is a virtual revolving door between Lilly, your top career patron, and your various campaign staffs?
- 2) How was your March 1992 vote against a cost containment measure for pharmaceutical influenced by the fact that Eli Lilly stood to lose tens of thousands of dollars in tax credits if the measure passed?
- 3) What was your motivation for asking Brazil’s president in 1991 to meet with the president of Eli Lilly to discuss patents legislation that drug companies, including Eli Lilly, thought would financially harm them?
- 4) How do you contrast your plain-speaking, low-key image with the results of a Common Cause study which reported that you kept more honoraria than any other senator between 1983 and 1987, and were the second-highest senatorial recipient during the same time period?

Dole

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ships with a wide variety of special interests which have generously supported the senator's causes over the past decades including not only his senate and presidential campaigns, but also his political action committee Campaign America; his charity, the Dole Foundation and his now-defunct think-tank, the Better America Foundation.

The questions that follow largely address those relationships Dole has with major contributors who have given money to his causes and have helped him throughout his years in Washington:

1) How do you respond to assertions that it is unethical to purchase real estate from a major political contributor whose corporation is directly affected by your actions as a senator? When your wife Elizabeth Dole and her brother John Hanford purchased the Sea View condominium in Bal Harbour, FL from Dwayne Andreas, CEO of Archer Daniels Midland, did you receive any prior advice/approval from the Senate Ethics Committee? How do you explain the below market price and the seven-month delay in making the first monthly mortgage payment, as reported by The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal?

2) What was the difference between the Committee to Re-Elect the President (CREEP) receiving millions of dollars in secret contributions and your now-defunct think-tank, Better America Foundation (BAF) receiving millions of dollars in contributions kept secret until the Foundation's demise in 1995?

3) In the two decades since Watergate, you have been one of Congress' top recipients of special interest money. How do you respond to critics who say that you represent the status quo of Washington, and have been a serious impediment to political reform proposals, including campaign finance reform legislation throughout your career?

4) In 1988, your longtime friend and associate David Owen, who also handled financial matters for your wife for many years, resigned from your presidential campaign and was later convicted and served time for tax fraud relat-

ing to illegal campaign contributions he made to a Kansas gubernatorial candidate, reportedly at your behest. Additionally questions arose about a series of illegal contributions made to your 1986 senate campaign from employees of the now-defunct Birdview Satellite Communication company that Owen claims you had knowledge of. How do you respond to these events? What was your role in Owen's conviction and the Birdview donations?

5) In 1971, you said that the American voters were entitled to know "where candidates for public office and the organizations supporting them get their money and what they spend that money for," yet the Better America Foundation refused to do just that, disclose its donors or reveal where its money was spent until after the operation shut down. How do you justify your previous statement with the policies of BAF?

6) Why did you write a letter to the Treasury Department in 1992 asking officials to allow the Ernest and Julio Gallo Winery to change its champagne labels?

7) Why have you continued to support the Market Promotion Program (MPP) even amid complaints from your own party that it is nothing more than corporate welfare? Is it just coincidental that your biggest career patron, the Ernest and Julio Gallo Winery, received almost \$24 million from MPP between 1986 and 1994?

8) Why have you also continued your support of the Export Enhancement Program, likewise targeted by Republican budget cutters and conservative groups like the Heritage Foundation as a wasteful program? How did Archer Daniels Midland's receipt of \$134 million over a 10-year span influence your position on the program?

9) Why did you have the president of Citizens for a Sound Economy (CSE) write the original regulatory reform bill considering the fact that the bill would greatly help the group's founders and major patrons, Koch Industries? Also, why did you further pen a fundraising letter for CSE and have your foundation contribute money to CSE? Wouldn't the regulatory reform bill give Koch Industries a means to thwart the \$54 million lawsuit filed against them by federal authorities for 300 oil spills in six states?

Buchanan

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lobbyist for China, Japan and other countries in a fashion which you campaigned against in 1992. Why do you have a registered foreign agent as an advisor? How do you reconcile this with your positions against international trade and trade agreements?

2) Roger Milliken, the textile magnate chairman of Milliken & Co., is an advisor and patron. How has he influenced your thinking on trade, since as a Reagan aide in the mid-1980s you opposed trade protectionist policies. What made you change your thinking on trade 180 degrees?

3) Given that you have focused on abusive corporate powers in your campaigns, are you troubled that Thomas Monaghan's company Dominos, the largest fast-food delivery chain in America is in court under investigation of an anti-trust violation where litigants claim that Dominos is abusing its corporate power by selling pizza dough at five times the estimated market share to its franchisees?

Steve Forbes

Millionaire magazine publisher Steve Forbes, who has made a recent splash in the 1996 GOP primary race, has centered his campaign on his advocacy of a flat tax to replace the current income tax system. Forbes, however, has not fully answered questions about how his flat tax proposal would affect him or his business interests.

The questions below concern Forbes' flat tax proposal:

1) Why have you declined to release your tax returns?

2) Precisely how would the creation of a flat tax — the centerpiece of your presidential campaign — affect you personally? Affect Forbes Inc? The Forbes family?

Alan Keyes

Former radio talk show host Alan Keyes, considered a long shot for the GOP presidential nod, has had a very difficult time getting his campaign off the ground. He has had limited experience in running for office and twice lost as a U.S. senate candidate in Maryland. The following questions address his brief history of fundraising:

1) You served for a number of years as president of Citizens Against Government Waste. Could you tell us the major donors to the organization during your tenure there?

2) The Campaign for Maryland's Future has at various times existed as an independent PAC and as your campaign committee. When the first transition was made from a PAC to the Keyes committee, what happened to organization funds that had been donated to the PAC? Did they then become available to your campaign?

Rep. Robert Dornan

Rep. Robert Dornan has made his 1996 run for president largely a conservative, ideological one. For various reasons, the firebrand congressman is considered by many pundits to be a dark-horse candidate for the Republican nomination. The questions below deal with relationships Dornan has had with special interest groups:

1) How do you respond to claims that it was a conflict of interest for you to receive an \$11,000 salary in 1984 from the American Space Frontier Committee, a group you helped found, when they advocate the Strategic Defense Initiative, a program which you as a congressman were to vote on?

2) Why did your journey to the Persian Gulf after the war ended, on a trip paid for by the Fluor Corporation?

Sen. Phil Gramm

Senator Phil Gramm has made no bones about the fact that, aside from winning the presidency, he is after one thing: big money. His quest for money is something that has driven his political behavior over recent years and has immersed him in many relationships with special interests that he believes can help further his career.

The following questions encompass a variety of issues where Gramm and a company or political ally worked together to create a mutually beneficial relationship:

1) How do you respond to assertions that it was unethical for you to enter into a business arrangement with a campaign donor who also got you to contact government regulators? How does the work Jerry Stiles — a convicted felon who gave you more than \$50,000 in unbilled or free construction work on the Eastern shore vacation home — differ from the Keating Five cases, other than the fact that Charles Keating did not help any of those senators pay for their home improvements?

2) Who were the clients for Gramm and Associates, and is it true you were still a partner in the firm in 1980 while serving in your first term in Congress?

3) Six of nine energy donors to your campaigns — which requested that energy derivatives be exempted from federal regulations — were donors to your senate campaigns. Why did you and your campaign accept contributions from commodity-related interests that may have had business before your wife when she was the chairwoman of the Commodities Futures Trading Commission? Why was Wendy Gramm utilized to politically and financially support your re-election when she was also regulating those interests? What steps did you and she take, if any, to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest?

4) Why do you continue to surround yourself with contributors associated with major savings and loan failures — such as Bum Bright, Gene Phillips and John Dalton — which cumulatively have cost taxpayers billions of dollars?

5) Why did you push for the nomination of Durward Curlee — the notorious “High Flyer” S&L “looters’ lobbyist” — to the Federal Home Loan Bank Board?

6) Other Republican senators have complained that taking the National Republican senatorial committee mailing list, worth thousands of dollars with its 3.3 million names and addresses, is tantamount to outright theft. Have you or your campaign paid the NRSC for “renting” the list, and if not, what is your justification for taking it?

7) During your fundraising efforts in 1995, it was reported that you often gave a slide show which included images of a bundle of dollar bills, a stack of gold coins and a green sack with a dollar sign emblazoned on the front. How do these pictures project the image that you would be a different kind of president who would not be beholden to “politics as usual” and to special interests?

8) How do you justify accepting the most NRA money — more than any other politician in recent decades — and attending fund raisers they hosted for you, when you also introduced, sponsored or supported NRA interests on 18 bills on gun issues and solicited contributions for the NRA on NRA stationery?

9) Why did you refuse to make campaign records for your 1984 senate race publicly available and force the Federal Election Commission to engage in a five year legal wrangle with you to obtain the records (which later revealed 127 illegal corporate contributions which resulted in a \$30,000 FEC fine)?

10) Why did you utilize your taxpayer-funded senate staff to facilitate your 1989-90 re-election efforts, as was reported by former staffers?

Alan Keyes

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INSIDE UNANSWERED QUESTIONS THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES DONT WANT YOU TO ASK

3) In September 1988, you received a number of donations from members of the Political Club for Growth, including Richard and Virginia Gilder and Ron Lauder. Did you give a speech before this group? What kind of contact have you had with them during your presidential campaign? Did they communicate to you any policy positions they are currently interested in?

4) How do you explain drawing a salary from your campaign funds in your 1992 Senate bid?

5) What happened to the \$58,000 that disappeared from your campaign in July 1995?

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