

January 7, 2014

Tim Carney says de Blasio's attack on the "rich" will miss them and fall instead on the middle class.

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Charter schools, crisis pregnancy centers, small businesses and private charities are all in de Blasio's crosshairs. These are government's rivals in the business of getting people what they want and need — and a growing government doesn't tolerate rivals.

Charter schools have long irked the teachers' unions and many others on the Left. They are publicly funded schools, but they are run by private bodies. This decentralizes power, weakens the unions and applies competitive pressure to public schools.

But charter schools' worst offense may be offering a different educational experience. The Left puts a huge emphasis on solidarity, which is a virtue. But sometimes "solidarity" can mutate into uniformity. If some New York City kids are at a stellar charter school while others are at mediocre public schools, then we have, to use de Blasio's favorite phrase, "two cities." This is intolerable to many activists and journalists on the Left, some of whom pen out op-eds declaring it a sin to send your kids to private school. ...

John Hinderaker picks up a Cato post about the 1987 NY Times arguments against the minimum wage. That's right, the paper that is now a reliable organ of the Dem party used to have some independent thoughts.

... The Times editorialists failure to mention that until very recently, they themselves (or their predecessors on the editorial board) agreed that the minimum wage hurts employment—the "party line theory" that is now "discredited." David Boaz of the Cato Institute recounts the Times's history on the issue:

The New York Times gets the prize for its stark decline in economic understanding. ...

[F]or decades the Times's editors knew better. Sure, Henry Hazlitt wrote some of their editorials back in the 1930s. But that doesn't explain the paper's continuing criticisms of the minimum wage into the 1990s. Bruce Bartlett reported some of the history in 2004:

When I first began clipping Times editorials on the minimum wage back in the 1970s, they were unambiguous in their condemnation of it as misdirected, inefficient, and having negative consequences for most of those it was supposed to help. For example, an August 17, 1977, editorial stated, "The basic effect of an increase in the minimum wage ... would be to intensify the cruel competition among the poor for scarce jobs." For this reason, it said, "Minimum wage legislation has no place in a strategy to eliminate poverty."

In the 1980s, the Times became even more aggressive in its denunciations of the minimum wage. Rather than simply argue against increases, it actively campaigned for abolition of the minimum wage altogether. Indeed, a remarkable editorial on January 14, 1987, was entitled, "The Right Minimum Wage: \$0.00."

Everything in that editorial is still true today. "There's a virtual consensus among economists that the minimum wage is an idea whose time has passed," it said. "Raise the legal minimum price of labor above the productivity of the least skilled workers and few will be hired," it correctly observed. In conclusion, "The idea of using a minimum wage to overcome poverty is old, honorable — and fundamentally flawed. It's time to put this hoary debate behind us, and find a better way to improve the lives of people who work very hard for very little."

Even in the 1990s, the Times remained skeptical about the value of raising the minimum wage. An April 5, 1996, editorial conceded that a proposed 90 cent increase in the minimum wage would wipe out 100,000 jobs. It said that Republican critics of the minimum wage as a "crude" antipoverty tool were right.

One would think that the Times owes its readers an explanation of why it has done a 180-degree turn on this issue, but none has ever been offered. ...

Even the president used to know the truth of the Times' position. Now he is a fulltime demagogue. Or perhaps back then Valerie Jarrett didn't have full control. [Byron York](#) has the story.

In coming weeks [President Obama](#) and Hill Democrats will launch a new campaign to raise the [minimum wage](#). Working with [labor unions](#) and activist groups, Democrats hope to increase the federal minimum wage from its current \$7.25 to \$10.10. "It's well past the time to raise a minimum wage that in real terms right now is below where it was when Harry Truman was in office," the president declared in his Dec. 4 speech on inequality.

Republicans will argue that raising the minimum wage will hurt the economy, as employers, especially small businesses, hire fewer low-wage workers. It's an argument Obama expects to hear a lot. "Now, we all know the arguments that have been used against a higher minimum wage," he said December 4. "Some say it actually hurts low-wage workers -- businesses will be less likely to hire them. But there's no solid evidence that a higher minimum wage costs [jobs](#), and research shows it raises incomes for low-wage workers and boosts short-term economic growth."

*Perhaps the key word in that passage is "solid" — the president seems to acknowledge that there is evidence a higher minimum wage costs jobs, but he doesn't find it "solid." A few years ago, though, in his 2006 book *The Audacity of Hope*, Obama seemed much more open to the evidence that raising the minimum wage results in less hiring.*

"It may be true — as some economists argue — that any big jumps in the minimum wage discourage employers from hiring more workers," then-Sen. Obama wrote. Nevertheless, Obama still wanted to do it, so he laid out his best case: "When the minimum wage hasn't been changed in nine years and has less purchasing power in real dollars than it did in 1955, so that

someone working full-time today in a minimum-wage job doesn't earn enough to rise out of poverty, such arguments carry less force," Obama added.

Little of Obama's 2006 case applies today. ...

John Hinderaker also posts on the lies constructed by Rachel Maddow. *MSNBC has had a hard time lately. The network fired Martin Bashir and Alec Baldwin for craziness, on-air and off-air respectively. Melissa Harris-Perry was forced to apologize, first on Twitter and then, tearfully, on the air, for making political hay out of Mitt Romney's adopted grandson. The network put Ed Schulz out to pasture, and most people wrote Chris Matthews off as a hysteric long ago, so that pretty much leaves Rachel Maddow—amazingly enough—as MSNBC's supposed voice of sanity. [Eliana Johnson](#) has reported on Maddow's status as the "queen" of MSNBC, who wields more control than anyone else over the network's often-crazed content.*

But is Maddow any better than the rest? A recent incident suggests that if anything, she is worse.

Last Thursday, 45 minutes before Maddow's show began, her producer sent this email to representatives of Koch Industries, with which MSNBC has long been obsessed. ...

Examiner

[Bill de Blasio's 'march' to end inequality tramples little guy](#)

by Timothy P. Carner

As New York City's crusading liberal Mayor [Bill de Blasio](#) takes up his pitch fork, don't worry too much about the wealthy bankers he plans to tax -- they can fend for themselves. The potential victims of de Blasio's "march toward a fairer, more just, more progressive place" are the small businesses and voluntary associations that make up civil society.

Charter schools, crisis pregnancy centers, small businesses and private charities are all in de Blasio's crosshairs. These are government's rivals in the business of getting people what they want and need — and a growing government doesn't tolerate rivals.

Charter schools have long irked the teachers' [unions](#) and many others on the Left. They are publicly funded schools, but they are run by private bodies. This decentralizes power, weakens the unions and applies competitive pressure to public schools.

But charter schools' worst offense may be offering a different educational experience. The Left puts a huge emphasis on solidarity, which is a virtue. But sometimes "solidarity" can mutate into uniformity. If some New York City kids are at a stellar charter school while others are at mediocre public schools, then we have, to use de Blasio's favorite phrase, "two cities." This is intolerable to many activists and journalists on the Left, some of whom pen out op-eds declaring it a sin to send your kids to private school.

De Blasio is taking aim at the charters. His first step: charging them rent for using city buildings. Again, these are basically public schools, just ones given more leeway in forming curriculum and hiring staff. Charging them rent is really just fining them — for the offense of being partially independent from government.

Crisis pregnancy centers are clinics for pregnant women, run by pro-life charities. They provide counseling, some basic health services and things like free baby clothes and toys. These centers also refer pregnant women to adoption services and advanced health care.

But these centers don't perform [abortions](#) or refer women to abortionists, and they counsel against abortion. De Blasio attacks them as "sham crisis pregnancy centers" and promises to sic regulators on them. If you want to help pregnant women in de Blasio's [New York City](#), you have to do it according to de Blasio's values -- which means more abortions.

De Blasio talks tough toward banks and big business, but he's planning to crack the whip on Mom and Pop. Currently, small businesses are exempt from the city's requirement that employers provide paid sick leave. De Blasio promises to end that exemption and saddle small businesses with that burden.

Private charity will also be brought to heel in de Blasio's New York. Nonprofit conservancies, funded by private donations, bankroll most of the operation of New York's Central Park. De Blasio wants to grab a huge portion of this money and redistribute it around the city. In effect, he wants to tax donors on their donations and use their money for his own purposes.

New York City government trying to shackle private charity is nothing new -- former Mayor [Michael Bloomberg](#) famously cracked down on good Samaritans feeding the homeless. But de Blasio poses a greater threat than even Bloomberg.

De Blasio's inauguration set a tone of intolerance for dissent. One speaker painted de Blasio's win as victory in the Civil War and promised "a new Reconstruction era." If you deal with your vanquished foes in city politics as if they were slaveholding traitors who started a war, that's worrisome.*

A century and a half ago, Reconstruction involved disenfranchising the losers and subjecting them to military rule. What would de Blasio's Reconstruction entail?

The mayor has little respect for those he disagrees with. "I know that our progressive vision isn't universally shared," de Blasio said at his inauguration, typically a moment for unity. "Some on the far Right continue to preach the virtue of trickle-down economics." Gotta love those open-minded liberals!

De Blasio plans to use government's power to crack down on civil society. He regards his ideological opponents with disdain.

This attitude makes even his modest liberal plans worrisome. Universal preschool is a standard liberal dream. But if some four-year-olds are under the care of benevolent city government, and others get individual attention from a stay-at-home moms, isn't that also a "Tale of Two Cities"? Universal K-12 education is compulsory. How long can universal Pre-K remain optional?

If de Blasio really intends to "put an end to economic and social inequalities that threaten to unravel the city," it will involve more than redistributing wealth. It will require coercion and rule by fiat, which are antithetical to America's democratic values.

We can admire de Blasio's ideals as he promises a "march toward a fairer, more just, more progressive place." But from every indication so far, it will be a forced march.

Power Line

[The NY Times: Against the Minimum Wage Before It Was For It](#)

by John Hinderaker

I had lunch with a couple of Republican Congressmen a week or so ago. They said the Democrats are desperate to talk about anything other than Obamacare, and have decided that their best distraction is the minimum wage. So we can expect to hear a lot about raising the minimum wage over the next ten months.

The New York Times editorial board, a reliable mouthpiece for the left wing of the Democratic Party, joined the chorus in an [editorial on Thursday](#):

Aided by a vast flow of corporate and right-wing money, Republicans have spent years persuading the public that the deficit is the nation's biggest financial problem and that austerity is the answer to it.

Of course, the Times doesn't mention the vaster flow of corporate, union and left-wing money; nor does it mention the in-kind contributions that it, and virtually every other newspaper, make to the liberal cause—which in this case, apparently, is the Democrats' theory that unprecedented trillion-dollar deficits are nothing to worry about.

Their success in making that argument — keeping taxes and government investment low — has helped increase American income inequality to crisis proportions: 95 percent of the income gains since 2009 have gone to the top 1 percent. The majority of the country has stagnated or lost ground, leaving the economy sluggish.

Sure: the complete failure of the Democrats' economic policies is the Republicans' fault! But now we get to the point:

Last week, [the Democrats] announced a nationwide campaign in 2014 for a higher minimum wage, showing how it would help the economy and reduce inequality, while highlighting the cost

of the adamant Republican opposition to the idea. They also plan to press for wage-increase referendums in states with crucial Congressional races this November.

It's smart politics. ...

But more important, it's good economics, and it would benefit tens of millions of people.

The Times dismisses Republican objections to increasing the minimum wage:

"When you raise the price of employment, guess what happens? You get less of it," said Speaker John Boehner in February, espousing a party-line theory that most economists agree has been discredited.

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How about the Times's current claim that the arguments against the minimum wage have been "discredited"? [Caroline Baum](#) responds:

Economists David Neumark and William Wascher reviewed more than 100 studies on the minimum wage in a 2006 paper for the National Bureau of Economic Research: "Minimum Wages and Employment: A Review of Evidence from the New Minimum Wage Research." Here's a summary of their findings: "The oft-stated assertion that recent research fails to support the traditional view that the minimum wage reduces the employment of low-wage workers is clearly incorrect." What's more, almost all the papers they reviewed "point to negative employment effects" for the U.S. and many other countries. The effect is greater for low-skilled workers, whom the minimum wage is designed to help. Overall, the authors found very little evidence of positive effects from raising the minimum wage.

Neumark and Wascher responded to an "unbalanced" Sunday Review article on the effect of the minimum wage in a Dec. 8, 2013, letter to the editor. And the Washington Post's Fact Checker gave President Barack Obama two Pinocchios for his repeated assertion that "there's no solid evidence that a higher minimum wage costs jobs."

Baum notes that the Times's position (and that of the Democratic Party) amounts to a denial of the law of supply and demand. Maybe we should start calling them "economics deniers."

But I do give the Times and other liberals this much credit: they are consistent in their economic ignorance. The same liberals who think they can increase the cost of labor without impacting the demand for labor, also think that they can increase the supply of labor without reducing its price. This is why they fervently endorse the Senate's immigration bill, which would bring tens of millions of new unskilled laborers to the U.S. The law of supply and demand dictates that this vast influx of unskilled labor will drive down wages, just as increasing wages via legislation will diminish the demand for unskilled labor. People who don't understand such basic principles are too ignorant to be making laws to govern the rest of us.

Examiner

[Obama on the minimum wage --- then and now](#)

by Byron York

In coming weeks [President Obama](#) and Hill Democrats will launch a new campaign to raise the [minimum wage](#). Working with [labor unions](#) and activist groups, Democrats hope to increase the federal minimum wage from its current \$7.25 to \$10.10. "It's well past the time to raise a minimum wage that in real terms right now is below where it was when Harry Truman was in office," the president declared in his Dec. 4 speech on inequality.

Republicans will argue that raising the minimum wage will hurt the economy, as employers, especially small businesses, hire fewer low-wage workers. It's an argument Obama expects to hear a lot. "Now, we all know the arguments that have been used against a higher minimum

wage," he said December 4. "Some say it actually hurts low-wage workers -- businesses will be less likely to hire them. But there's no solid evidence that a higher minimum wage costs [jobs](#), and research shows it raises incomes for low-wage workers and boosts short-term economic growth."

Perhaps the key word in that passage is "solid" — the president seems to acknowledge that there is evidence a higher minimum wage costs jobs, but he doesn't find it "solid." A few years ago, though, in his 2006 book *The Audacity of Hope*, Obama seemed much more open to the evidence that raising the minimum wage results in less hiring.

"It may be true — as some economists argue — that any big jumps in the minimum wage discourage employers from hiring more workers," then-Sen. Obama wrote. Nevertheless, Obama still wanted to do it, so he laid out his best case: "When the minimum wage hasn't been changed in nine years and has less purchasing power in real dollars than it did in 1955, so that someone working full-time today in a minimum-wage job doesn't earn enough to rise out of poverty, such arguments carry less force," Obama added.

Little of Obama's 2006 case applies today. First, the minimum wage was last increased in 2007, and 2008, and 2009 — not quite the distance in time that Obama cited in *The Audacity of Hope*. Second, the minimum wage has had more or less purchasing power in real dollars at various times over the years. Obama's argument (in the inequality speech) that it is below where it was when Truman was in the White House is true of only one of Truman's eight years in office; the rest of that time, the real value of the minimum wage was below where it is today. And today's minimum wage is actually higher in real terms than it was at various points in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s.

Third, a minimum-wage worker today does in fact "earn enough to rise out of poverty." A full-time \$7.25-an-hour minimum-wage job pays \$15,080 a year, while the federal poverty level for an individual is \$11,490.

The bottom line is, the case for raising the minimum wage is nowhere near open-and-shut, something Sen. Barack Obama realized before becoming President Barack Obama. But that older, more nuanced view of the minimum wage will likely be absent from Obama's rhetoric in coming weeks; the new campaign will be all about politics. "Democratic Party leaders, bruised by months of attacks on the new health care program, have found an issue they believe can lift their fortunes both locally and nationally in 2014: an increase in the minimum wage," the [New York Times](#) reported on Dec. 29. The paper added that leading Democrats hope to use the minimum wage as "not only a wedge issue that they hope will place Republican candidates in a difficult position, but also a tool with which to enlarge the electorate in a nonpresidential election."

That's what is coming. Republicans may hope to discuss the minimum wage as a policy issue rather than a wedge issue. But they'll get no help from the president; the Barack Obama of 2006 won't be around.

Power Line

[Rachel Maddow Is Crazy, Too](#)

by John Hineraker

MSNBC has had a hard time lately. The network fired Martin Bashir and Alec Baldwin for craziness, on-air and off-air respectively. Melissa Harris-Perry was forced to apologize, first on Twitter and then, tearfully, on the air, for making political hay out of Mitt Romney's adopted grandson. The network put Ed Schulz out to pasture, and most people wrote Chris Matthews off as a hysteric long ago, so that pretty much leaves Rachel Maddow—amazingly enough—as MSNBC's supposed voice of sanity. [Eliana Johnson](#) has reported on Maddow's status as the "queen" of MSNBC, who wields more control than anyone else over the network's often-crazed content.

But is Maddow any better than the rest? A recent incident suggests that if anything, she is worse.

Last Thursday, 45 minutes before Maddow's show began, her producer sent this email to representatives of Koch Industries, with which MSNBC has long been obsessed. Click to enlarge:

From: Shuster, Amy (NBCUniversal, MSNBC)
Sent: Thursday, January 02, 2014 07:14 PM Central Standard Time
To: Holden, Mark (Koch Legal); Tappan, Rob
Subject: request for comment from the Maddow show

Mark and Rob,

I'm sorry for the late request.

We're covering the story of the Florida law that was just struck down on the 31st – the law that mandated drug testing for welfare applicants.

The Florida Foundation for Government Accountability (FFGA) has supported drug testing for welfare recipients. The Koch Brothers have donated to the State Policy Network of which the FFGA is a member. Do the Kochs wish to comment on mandatory drug testing for welfare recipients?

Please let me know and sorry for the late notice.

Thank you,
Amy

Amy Shuster
Producer
The Rachel Maddow Show

The Koch employees who received the email were a bit nonplussed, since Koch had nothing to do with the Florida welfare legislation in question, and had never supported—or, as far as I know, ever heard of—the Florida Foundation for Government Accountability. One of them responded to the producer; by that time, the show was already in progress:

From: Tappan, Rob

Sent: Thursday, January 02, 2014 9:09 PM

To: Shuster, Amy (NBCUniversal, MSNBC); Holden, Mark (Koch Legal); Cohlmiya, Missy

Subject: RE: request for comment from the Maddow show

Amy: Happy New Year. Thanks for the email. You are right - it is a late request. Not sure what the point of your question is and not sure i see how we would have anything to say on this, since we aren't involved in this issue in any way. Thanks.

Rob Tappan

Robert Tappan

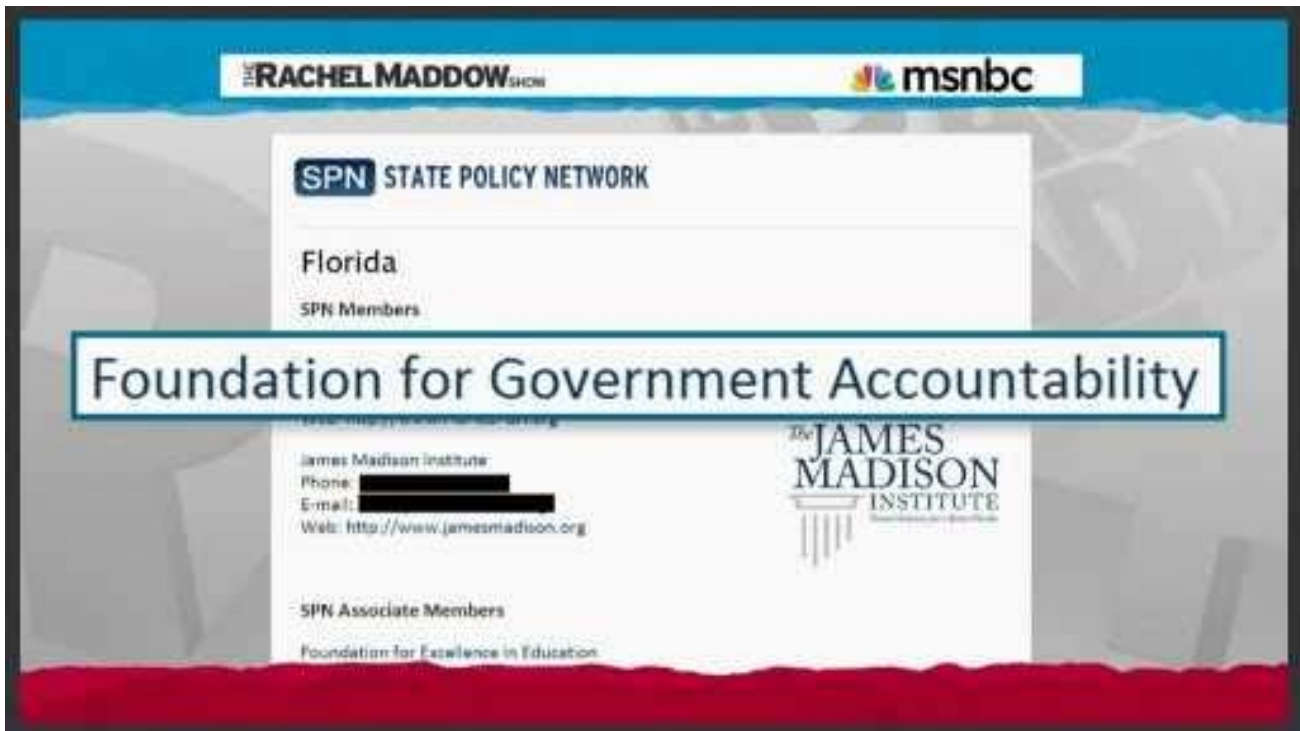
Director, External Relations

Koch Companies Public Sector

Rachel Maddow, naturally, didn't wait to learn the facts. Her segment on the Florida law, which required drug testing of all welfare applicants and had just been struck down by a federal judge, was [all about Koch](#)—bizarrely so, since Koch had nothing to do with the law in question:

Ms. Maddow moved on to a discussion of a 2011 Florida welfare law and a Florida federal court ruling concerning that law, falsely stating that the “Koch brothers . . . have been promoting forced drug tests for people on welfare.” Ms. Maddow based this false statement on her claim that the Florida Foundation for Government Accountability (“FFGA”) was involved in the legislation. This was a knowingly false and malicious statement by Ms. Maddow – Koch is not involved in promoting any such issue and we are not working with the FFGA on any such issue, as we explained to you last night. Indeed, your email from last night shows that you knew Koch had no link to the FFGA or this issue since you stated that Koch “donated to the State Policy Network of which FFGA is a member.” Nevertheless, Ms. Maddow repeatedly and falsely referred to FFGA as a “Koch brothers affiliated group,” a “Koch brothers connected Florida group,” a “Koch brothers related group,” and “this group (FFGA) affiliated with them (Koch) in Florida.”

Given that Koch has zero relationship with FFGA, Maddow based her claims on the fact that Koch has donated risibly small amounts—\$40,000 over eight years—to the State Policy Network, and FFGA, which advocated for the Florida law, is a member of the State Policy Network. She used this graphic to explain the connection to her audience:



But this is an utter *non sequitur*. The State Policy Network—let alone the Koch brothers!—had nothing to do with the Florida legislation. Ms. Maddow perhaps was trying to suggest that the State Policy Network is a funding source for FFGA, so that the Koch brothers have indirectly supported FFGA, albeit to a ridiculously small level (nowhere near \$1,000 on a pro rata basis). But that isn't true either. I happen to know a little bit about this, since I was formerly the Chairman of the Board of a think tank that is a member of the State Policy Network. The SPN is like a trade association of conservative think tanks, with members in every state. The SPN doesn't support the local groups, like FFGA; on the contrary, the local think tanks pay dues to support SPN. So there is no connection—not even a minute, indirect one—between Koch and FFGA. I repeat: as far as we know, no one at Koch had ever heard of FFGA before Rachel Maddow's show on Thursday of last week, and Koch did nothing—zero, nada—to support the Florida legislation in question.

So Rachel Maddow's entire segment was one big lie. Her central premise, that the Florida welfare statute was an initiative of the Koch brothers, was false, and she knew it. She made the whole thing up to fool the low-IQ viewers who form MSNBC's base. But the story gets even worse.

In an email dated January 3—follow the link above—Koch asked MSNBC to retract, and apologize for, Maddow's fabrications. Instead of correcting her misrepresentations, Maddow, in her show on Friday, triumphantly refused, saying "I don't play requests." Or, in other words, "I lie with impunity, and MSNBC gives me cover." The left-wing echo chamber swooned. [Daily Kos](#)—remember them?—headlined, "Rachel Maddow Speaks Truth to Powerful Koch Brothers." [Raw Story's](#) sycophantic take was, "Maddow scorches Koch brothers on 'correction' demand: 'I don't play requests.'" So if you are a left-winger, blatant lies about conservatives make you a hero.

But the corruption goes deeper still. Rachel Maddow says that any company that supports the State Policy Network is "affiliated with" the Florida Foundation for Government Accountability, and is responsible for everything FFGA does. That is wrong, but let's go with it. Who else,

besides Koch, [has supported the State Policy Network?](#) You might be surprised: the list includes Microsoft, Facebook, AT&T, Time Warner Cable, GlaxoSmithKline, Kraft Foods, and many more. So Maddow randomly singled out Koch as opposed to any of these other companies as the sponsor of the Florida legislation which, as far as we know, Koch wasn't even aware of. Well, not randomly, because MSNBC is obsessed with Koch, but you get the point.

But wait! A final level of deception remains to be revealed: one of the many companies that have contributed to the State Policy Network is **Comcast, which owns MSNBC and is Rachel Maddow's employer**. So in her Thursday broadcast, Maddow could equally well have said that MSNBC "ha[s] been promoting forced drug tests for people on welfare," and that FFGA is an "MSNBC-affiliated group." She didn't do this for obvious reasons. She knew that she was addressing a stupid audience that would never know the difference.

If Rachel Maddow is the best that MSNBC has to offer, MSNBC is in even deeper trouble than its steep ratings decline would indicate.

PAUL ADDS: Wow! This is surely one of the greatest takedowns ever. I hear they are planning to put up an apartment building on the site where Maddow used to be standing.





**HELLO, IS THIS THE
OBAMA EXCHANGE?**

It is? I'd like to exchange Obama for a better president please.



IF OBAMACARE FAILS, I WILL JUST USE YOUR
TAX DOLLARS TO BAIL THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY OUT



AND YOU WILL JUST SIT THERE AND
LET ME DO IT.....GOT TO LOVE SHEEPLE

HOW ARE VOTER ID LAWS

RACIST?

THE REAL RACISTS ARE LIBERALS WHO THINK

only white people

are capable of getting an ID