



Written by [Christian Gomez](#) on January 9, 2017

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## Exclusive Interview With John Birch Society CEO

The election of Donald Trump has generated much buzz in the mainstream media over the inaccuracy of the polls, why the American people voted as they did, and of course, what Trump will do as president. The buzz has also included claims that Trump will undo much of what has been done under Obama, that he will imperil our “democracy,” and that “Trumpism” is the latest manifestation of The John Birch Society. *The New American* magazine recently had the opportunity to sit down with and interview Arthur R. Thompson, the CEO of The John Birch Society, and ask him about this, his thoughts about this past election, and also what lies ahead for the Society in the coming years. Thompson (shown on the right, with interviewer Christopher Gomez) became CEO of The John Birch Society in 2005 and is now in his 11th year.



***The New American:*** How does the election of Donald Trump to the White House affect or change any of the goals of The John Birch Society, as compared to the Obama administration or a Hillary presidency had she won?

**Arthur R. Thompson:** First of all, let me state that in my lifetime, this is the first time we have even had a debate as to the president-elect’s nominees for his Cabinet and others. In the past 100 years, there has been no influence in the debate by constitutionalists and those opposing internationalism. While we may be disappointed by what is going on with some appointments, there can be no question that some very good people are going to be involved in the new administration. It will remain to be seen just how much influence they will have.

However, the changes in federal administrations have never changed the basic agenda of The John Birch Society. This is because there is an agenda by those who wish to rule the American people that has never changed from its basic ideas of changing our American society on the road to building socialism. This agenda has been used by every despot since history has been recorded, with a few nuances altered due to the growth of technology. We are dealing with human nature, which never changes.

From Greece and Rome, those who want to rule have used the same tactics: the accumulation of police power; the bread and circuses that have evolved into the dole today, building a class of dependents on government; and by placing strings across their populations in the form of regulations and laws wherein the people could not exercise their rights.



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We proceed on the premise that those who come to power want more power, and while some aspects of onerous government may be reversed, until all aspects of unconstitutional government are removed — not replaced or reformed — The John Birch Society will continue to adhere to our standard goals of less government and more responsibility and, with God’s help, a better world.

**TNA:** *Now that the president-elect is a Republican and both the House and Senate are also Republican, do you expect the Republican Party to follow through on its legislative agenda?*

**Thompson:** The experiences of the past may tell us a great deal about the future. The past indicates that the Republican Party contains elements that are essentially no different than the Democrat Party. Keep in mind that politicians run in the party of the majority of their constituency if they want to win. Therefore, there are people who simply adopt the party of the voters — not necessarily latching onto what the voters really believe in — in order to get elected.

In addition, the history of the Republican Party has been one of compromise at best, and in certain instances it has been more socialist than the Democrats. We have to remember the adage of British Lord Acton: “Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.” To this we have to add, those who seek power use any label and cause to rise to power.

Finally, we have to remember the admonition of Thomas Jefferson to bind man “down from mischief by the chains of the Constitution,” meaning the politicians. We have to work to bind down all politicians, bound down by the chains of the Constitution no matter what party they profess.

**TNA:** *Do you think that Trump will follow through on his campaign promises?*

**Thompson:** We sincerely hope he follows through on constitutional promises, but we are not holding our breath. Through helping build constituent pressure on Washington, it will be part of our job to see that he does keep promises that are crucial, such as stopping foreign entanglements called free trade, preventing illegal immigration, halting government intrusion into private business such as the medical field, stopping federal intrusion into local schools, etc.

**TNA:** *Now that he’s been elected president, what could or should Donald Trump actually do to make America great again?*

**Thompson:** A short answer is to eliminate unconstitutional federal agencies, such as the Department of Education and the EPA; begin to return so-called federal lands to the states; sell federal “businesses” that compete with the private sector; put the monies into eliminating the debt; and eliminate regulations that give government unconstitutional power. In other words, start making government small and constitutional again. Once this happens, prosperity will be a reality and innovation will help build our economy in ways that are unimaginable today.

To make the point, my grandfather’s first salaried job was driving a stagecoach between Missoula and Ronan, Montana. Before he died, he saw a man walk on the moon — tremendous economic and technological advances in one life. This could happen again if the controls were lifted from the free market and the mental market as they were during my grandfather’s lifetime.

**TNA:** *Jeet Heer, senior editor of the left-wing New Republic, recently wrote, “The Birchers were important precursors to what is now the governing ideology of the Republican Party: Trumpism.” What is your response to those who claim that Donald Trump and his election to the White House are an extension or result of The John Birch Society?*



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**Thompson:** One way to look at this is the fact that most of the issues in the 2016 campaign were issues that our Society pioneered, some for decades when no other organization would touch them or even understand the problems they presented. We are not saying we had anything to do with Mr. Trump. What we can say is that in some cases we laid down the base of understanding on these issues — such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership or TPP — before anyone, and before most other organizations on issues such as illegal immigration.

One thing that we must point out is that Trump captured a movement. That movement was created by the members of The John Birch Society, directly or indirectly. It is true that some people and organizations adopted our causes and took credit for them, but they were started by the JBS.

The manner in which the JBS operates is not to make a great deal of noise, saying, “Look at me, look at me — look at what I have done,” but to go about steadily educating our friends, family, and local opinion molders. In this regard, it is gratifying to go all over the country and see our members working as leaders in all sorts of groups and in local government and legislatures, working to educate Americans on the important issues.

One thing that we can definitely state is that the internationalist agenda is something we have educated people on for every year that we have been in existence, particularly on the dangers of the United Nations and how its tentacles have worked into all levels of our government and academia — even into business associations that should be pro-American but which have become more interested in internationalism.

We have disseminated literally hundreds of millions of pieces of literature since 1959 on this subject. We have done likewise with films, filmstrips, recordings, videos, etc., to tens of millions of people, not counting the Internet, which has propelled all organizations well beyond their immediate membership. As a result, a sizable segment of the American people now rejects internationalism and understands what the loss of sovereignty means to our economy and the freedom of the American people, and has spoken at the polls in 2016. No question.

One thing the reader can look at is how our magazine, *The New American*, has been right on target, setting the dials on the concerns of the voters for years. This can be done, of course, by reviewing many of the articles *The New American* has published since its launch in 1985. But one article in particular, “Thirty Years of Projecting the Lines” by Gary Benoit, published in 2015, surveys a number of the predictions where the passage of time proved us correct and the major media wrong. This article, available online at [TheNewAmerican.com](#), will startle the reader by just how accurate we have been over the years.

**TNA:** *What is your response to those who claim that the JBS is a relic of the Cold War — that it is no longer relevant?*

**Thompson:** The Cold War was a war against the growth of communism. Look at our streets today, with the demonstrations and violence happening today. These violent demonstrations are organized by communists, all with ties to international communism. For instance, if you look at the signs and banners at many of these anti-police and anti-Trump rallies you see the same names, such as RevCom, which stands for the Revolutionary Communist Party USA; or Socialist Alternative, which is the U.S. affiliate of the Committee for a Workers’ International, an association of radical Trotskyite communist parties around the world; the Workers World Party, another radical Marxist-Leninist party; and the ANSWER



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Coalition. We will further document this statement over and over again in the future. Communism is alive and well and just as dangerous as before — perhaps even more dangerous because it's labeled "socialism" and too many people do not yet understand the dangers of communism and what it means to them and their families.

We were, if not the only, almost the only organization saying that communism never died; it morphed tactics, to build behind the scenes and then come back later in a more dangerous form from the standpoint of being able to achieve success. They are back in full force, and we are here to stop them by exposing them and their tactics.

**TNA:** *What sort of challenges might a Trump presidency present to JBS and the country as a whole?*

**Thompson:** There are some problems that Trump may try to solve using tactics that will be, in all innocence, more dangerous in the long run than the problem trying to be solved. Carrying over the discussion with the problems with violence in the streets, a solution being discussed by Trump is massive support for our local police. Such support could very well turn into the federalizing of our local police in the long run. The real solution to the problems in the streets is to expose the organizations behind this violence and allow the police to do their jobs. There are some things that can prevent this on a local basis, but to discuss them would take more space than we have here.

On another note, the support by Trump for term limits may give us problems on two levels. First, our country's Founders found that term limits not only did not work, they were very dangerous, and this was one of the reasons for what became known as the Constitutional Convention. They wanted to eliminate term limits from the Articles of Confederation. There are many reasons that term limits do not work: First of all we already have term limits, they happen every election, and second, term-limits legislation would deny the electorate the candidate they may wish to retain. Furthermore, a term-limited congressman is a lame-duck congressman. And if you think a two-month lame-duck session of Congress is bad, just wait until it's extended for two to six years!

The problem is not term limits, it is in the electorate — they will simply elect someone else who is just as bad if they remain uninformed. But it works both ways. Ron Paul, for instance, would never have become the national figure he was, and is, if term limits had been in play. There are many reasons for not supporting term limits, but the biggest danger right now is that it will serve as an impetus for the constitutional convention movement that the JBS has been stopping for several decades. By building awareness of the dangers of a Con-Con among our members, who in turn contacted their state legislators, the JBS was able to convince various state legislatures to pass rescissions of their previous Article V Con-Con applications to Congress. Go to our website [JBS.org](#) for more information about our Choose Freedom — STOP A Con-Con action project.

**TNA:** *In light of Trump's vow to pull out of the TPP, will the JBS be ending its Stop The Free Trade Agenda?*

**Thompson:** Only when we see that the TPP and its Atlantic sister, the TTIP, are dead. However, we will never stop educating on the dangers of foreign entanglements.

**TNA:** *Despite Trump's election victory, Hillary Clinton won the millennial vote in a landslide 55-35 percent. Does this mean that liberalism is the wave of the future? And what can concerned parents do to help turn the tide on the apparent liberal hold over their children and many future voters?*



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**Thompson:** The wave of the future will be liberalism unless the JBS grows to a size to win the war against ignorance and the government schools are changed from bastions of liberalism at best and communism at worst. Parents should do what they can to have their children educated outside of the government schools, either by homeschooling them or enrolling them in a private school.

Our affiliate, FreedomProject Academy, has a superior school that is based on homeschooling. It is a virtual classroom with the students actually enrolled in a class, live, over the Internet. It combines the best of the class environment with the ability of the parents to interact with and supervise their children in their own home or church. We heartily recommend all parents to look into FreedomProject Academy online and seriously look at the possibilities for educating their children with a quality education.

**TNA:** *With the recent rise of violence against police in America, what if anything is The John Birch Society doing or planning to do to support local law enforcement?*

**Thompson:** We have for decades built Support Your Local Police committees all over the country. During the violence of the 1960s and 1970s, this was a hugely popular movement, and it stopped the violence in the streets by exposing who and what was behind the violence. Many police officers participated with us in this program. “It’s like déjà vu all over again,” as Yogi Berra once said. We are building our Support Your Local Police committees again to answer the call to stop the violence, and have added an additional twist we will reveal at a later date.

**TNA:** *In what direction would you like to see The John Birch Society go from here; where do you see the Society going in the next five or 10 years?*

**Thompson:** We would like to see the Society become the “go to” organization for the truth for the majority of the American people by continuing to earn their trust by always telling the truth, like it or not.

We must build the field organization of the Society to a level about four times what it is today. The Internet is a wonderful tool, but it is no substitute for local community organizing. We want local chapters in as many neighborhoods as possible, working on a nationally concerted action agenda toward national goals. These units will not only provide for the educating and activating of local people but will also provide the means to rebuild friendly trust of neighbors and rebuild the idea of neighborliness.

If we can attain this size of organization, we will achieve our goals. It will not be easy, it never has been — but it can be done if people simply believe it can be done and go out and do it.

\* \* \*

Regardless of who won the presidential election, The John Birch Society will continue to work to achieve the same objectives. As Thompson articulated, the Society remains undeterred in its mission of promoting “Less government, more responsibility, and — with God’s help — a better world.” What the media has classified as Trumpism was not created in a vacuum. Trump did not create the anti-globalist pro-Americanism movement; it was an outgrowth of The John Birch Society’s decades-long outreach and educating of the electorate about the Constitution and key legislative issues.

While some challenges may lie ahead, such as Trump’s support for term limits, additional calls for an Article V convention, and the National Popular Vote movement to effectively abolish the Electoral College, The John Birch Society does see an opportunity to promote an adherence to Americanist and



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constitutionalist virtues, as well as pulling the United States out of various entangling alliances. The election of Trump does not mean that one will hear or see less of The John Birch Society — quite the opposite.

As Thompson points out, there remains much work for The John Birch Society in order to overturn and undo decades of globalism, the growth of unconstitutional big government, and the moral decay of the nation's culture. The tide is turning on the globalists and the insiders, and The John Birch Society intends to see to it that their plans for a New World Order, as men such as outgoing Vice President Joe Biden and former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger call it, are never accomplished.



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