



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on October 9, 2018

Dershowitz, ACLU Veterans: Group Betrayed Principles on Kavanaugh

Alan Dershowitz (shown), the famed leftist civil-liberties lawyer who defended O.J. Simpson, says the American Civil Liberties Union has lost its way.

Its opposition to the confirmation of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh shows that fundraising objectives and political power, not civil liberties, are its new priorities.

But Dershowitz, one of the few Democrats [who said Kavanaugh deserved](#) the presumption of innocence when accused of sex crimes, isn't the only ACLU member who thinks the group has lost its way. Two influential former directors have said the fight against Kavanaugh betrayed its core mission.



Dershowitz — Dollars Over Principle

Writing for the Gatestone Institute, [Dershowitz averred](#) that the ACLU's [highly touted \\$1 million smear campaign](#) to defeat Kavanaugh was "all about pleasing the donors. The ACLU used to be cash poor but principle-rich. Now, ironically, after Trump taking office, the ACLU has never become so cash-rich, yet principle-poor."

Continued Dershowitz:

Before Donald Trump was elected President, the ACLU had an annual operating budget of \$60 million dollars. When I was on the ACLU National Board, it was a fraction of that amount. Today it is flush with cash, with net assets of over \$450 million dollars. As the ACLU itself admitted in its annual report ending 2017, it received "unprecedented donations" after President Trump's election. Unprecedented" it truly has been: the ACLU received \$120 million dollars from online donations alone (up from \$3-5 million during the Obama years).

But that money, he wrote, is not from "civil libertarians who care about free speech, due process, the rights of the accused and defending the unpopular. It is coming from radical leftists in Hollywood, Silicon Valley and other areas not known for a deep commitment to civil liberties."

The ACLU is now an arm of the totalitarian Left, [Dershowitz wrote](#). "The old ACLU would never have been silent when [Trump attorney] Michael Cohen's office was raided by the FBI and his clients' files seized; it would have yelled foul when students accused of sexual misconduct were tried by kangaroo courts; and it surely would have argued against a presumption of guilt regarding sexual allegations directed against a judicial nominee."

Money is what matters now to the ACLU, Dershowitz wrote. "When the ACLU's national political



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director and former Democratic Party operative Faiz Shakir was asked why the ACLU got involved in the Kavanaugh confirmation fight, he freely admitted, ‘People have funded us and I think they expect a return.’”

Dershowitz also recalled his days serving on ACLU boards, noting the wide variety of members, which included conservative Republicans. The organization was nonpartisan and non-political and concerned about one thing: the Bill of Rights and the protections Americans enjoy because of those first 10 amendments to the federal Constitution.

Other ACLU Veterans Unhappy

Other ACLU stalwarts aren’t happy either, and they think the organization has jumped the tracks.

Michael Meyers, ACLU’s former vice president, [told the *Washington Examiner*](#) that the group’s fight against Kavanaugh, which presumed he was guilty of the sex crimes of which he was accused, was “outrageous hypocrisy. It’s a violation of everything we believe in as civil libertarians. It’s appalling, shocking. It’s unacceptable.”

Wrote the liberal Meyers in a letter to president Susan Herman and executive director Anthony Romero, “I am embarrassed for you if neither of you opposed the national board’s policy shift or its leap to hard and fast conclusions about reports and accusations from persons whose memories are so cloudy and possibly mistaken.”

Another former board member, Wendy Kaminer, reiterated Dershowitz’s point — the organization is a leftist lobby group trolling for money: “I think the ad is appalling and one more example of progressive political sentiment trumping civil liberty concerns at ACLU.”

Communist Front Group

As understandable as these concerns are, [ACLU’s history isn’t as clean](#) as many might think.

Communist Roger Baldwin helped found the group in 1920 to transmit communist propaganda. “The American Civil Liberties Union is closely affiliated with the communist movement in the United States, and fully 90 percent of its efforts are on behalf of communists who have come into conflict with the law,” a committee of the U.S. House of Representatives found in 1931.

Baldwin openly explained his goal: “I am for Socialism, disarmament and ultimately, for the abolishing of the State itself.... I seek the social ownership of property, the abolition of the propertied class and sole control of those who produce wealth. Communism is the goal.”

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