



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on January 8, 2012

Whos Really Behind Anti-Huntsman Manchurian Candidate Video?

The whole flap began on January 4, when, as the [End Run](#) blog put it, “a ridiculous, pathetic joke of a video” entitled “Jon Huntsman’s Values” was posted on YouTube. The amateurish production, which questions whether the candidate’s values are American or Chinese, shows photos of Huntsman in China and clips of him speaking Chinese (both only natural given that he was once U.S. Ambassador to China), images of him with his adopted Chinese and Indian daughters (with the caption “China Jon’s Daughters/Even Adopted?” — whatever that is supposed to mean), and a still picture with Huntsman’s face superimposed over Mao Zedong’s. It concludes with the words “American Values and Liberty/Vote Ron Paul.”



One look at the video is enough to convince anyone that it is certainly not the work of a serious political campaign or someone closely tied to it — anyone, that is, except Huntsman, who seized on the fact that it included that one comment about voting for Ron Paul and was uploaded by a YouTube user known as [NHLiberty4Paul](#). Though he declared the video “stupid,” Huntsman demanded that Paul condemn and disavow it, saying he “object[ed] to” the misuse of the images of his adopted daughters. Even Cindy McCain — wife of Sen. John McCain, who has [endorsed Mitt Romney](#) for President — got in on the Paul-bashing action, tweeting: “I deeply resent the video made using the adopted daughters of @john[sic]huntsman. @ronpaul shame on you.”

The Paul campaign responded quickly and convincingly. Campaign chairman [Jesse Benton](#) labeled the video “disgusting” and called on the person who posted it to “remove it immediately.” Kate Schackai, Paul’s New Hampshire spokeswoman, told the [Washington Post](#) that the campaign had nothing to do with the video, adding that it “was utterly distasteful and no one who actually supports Dr. Paul’s principles would have made it.” The candidate himself, in an interview with [CNN’s John King](#), also disavowed the ad — which he apparently hadn’t even seen — while making the obvious point that it is impossible to “control the actions of every one of his supporters.”

Here is where it gets interesting. On January 6 the very same video was uploaded to YouTube under the account names [NH4Santorum](#), [NHfreedom4Romney](#), and — of all things — [NHLiberty4Huntsman](#), each time altering only the final caption and the accompanying video description to match the candidate whose supporters supposedly posted it. Thus, [NHLiberty4Huntsman](#)’s video, after showing exactly the same ad questioning Huntsman’s loyalty to the United States and asking what he has to hide, concludes with “American Values and Liberty/Vote Jon Huntsman”! In other words, it’s probably the work of some prankster, not a Paul supporter. (Give real Paul supporters credit for a sense of humor, however: Under



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the names [NH4JonHuntsman](#) and [NHfreedom4Huntsman](#), one has posted a satire of the Huntsman video that features clips of Paul speaking about the Constitution, with captions hinting that he is a communist and asking the viewer to vote for Huntsman. In comments the poster dares the media to give Huntsman the same treatment over this video that they gave Paul over the earlier one.)

While the video at least appears to be nothing more than a (very effective) prank, as End Run notes, “this story has generated more positive press for Huntsman than money could buy. Endearing images of him with his adopted daughters are all over the media, along with quotes of him explaining how he heroically saved them from a bleak fate.” This has led to speculation that the Huntsman campaign itself posted the video so it could turn around and reap the benefits; and there is evidence to back up the speculation.

For example, [NHLiberty4Paul](#)’s YouTube account was created the same day that the video was first uploaded. Even more suspiciously, writes End Run, “according to the publicly-viewable stats provided by YouTube, the [very first place this video was posted](#) was Jon Huntsman’s campaign website, [Jon2012.com](#). This was done on ... the very day the video was uploaded to YouTube, and before the video had received any traffic from other sites.”

“Pretty quick, on the draw, those Huntsman people — a little *too* quick, wouldn’t you say?” asked [Justin Raimondo](#), who also pointed out that “the video just happened to have footage of Huntsman’s daughters that I haven’t seen anywhere else.”

Then there is the matter of Huntsman’s three daughters, Liddy, Abby, and Mary Anne, who, under the handle [Jon2012girls](#), have been known to dabble in Internet attack videos, [spoofing the Herman Cain “smoking” ad](#) and [rapping insults at the rest of the GOP candidates to the tune of Justin Timberlake’s “Sexy Back.”](#) (The latter, by the way, was supposedly produced without authorization from the Huntsman campaign and, in fact, actively discouraged by it; yet Huntsman jumped at the chance to denounce Paul for a similar unauthorized video.) On January 4 — the day the “Manchurian Candidate” video was first posted — CNN’s Piers Morgan, interviewing Huntsman, suggested he have “the dirty work done by someone else,” perhaps his daughters. Huntsman replied, “They’ve got plenty up their sleeves, Piers, and you might be surprised at what they release in the next few days.” End Run reports that by Friday one of the daughters had “already gone on national TV [denouncing](#) the anonymously-created YouTube video ... as ‘vile’ and promoting Huntsman as a family man.” [Jon2012girls](#) retweeted Cindy McCain’s “shame on you” tweet. And perhaps most interestingly of all, one of the tags on the [NHLiberty4Paul](#) video is “[jon2012girls](#),” which was also one of the tags on the videos they previously made.

So was the video created by the Huntsman campaign? Was it posted by Liddy, Abby, and Mary Anne Huntsman, who could upload it, give Ron Paul a little heartburn, and then claim it was all their own idea, not authorized by the campaign, when their fingerprints were found all over it? Or was it simply the work of a jokester looking for 15 minutes of fame?

If it was the work of Huntsman or his daughters, it was pretty sloppy but effective in its own little way. How many people will dig deeply enough to find out Paul and his supporters had nothing to do with it? All they will remember is that one of his fans attacked Huntsman and his family on highly specious and personal grounds.

On the other hand, if the video was nothing more than a joke for which Huntsman fell but good, then maybe voters should be asking the same question as Raimondo: “If Huntsman flies off the handle this



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easily, and can be taken in by a transparently obvious prank like this stupid video, then do we really want his finger on the nuclear trigger?"

Photo of Jon Huntsman: AP Images



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