

Journalists Agree to Keep Mum on Conservative Donors at Koch Brothers Event

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In a rare move, journalists from a handful of major media outlets were granted access this weekend to a private and well-heeled gathering of Republican benefactors, sponsored by the billionaire brothers Charles and David Koch, on one condition: that they do not name any of the 450 donors attending, unless given explicit permission.

The three-day event, hosted by the Koch brothers-backed nonprofit organization Freedom Partners Chamber of Commerce, is being held at the St. Regis Monarch Beach luxury resort in California.

A small number of reporters confirmed they are attending the events on the condition that they keep mum.

“The Washington Post is one of nine news organizations allowed in to cover the traditionally private confab, on the condition that the donors present not be named without their permission,” [wrote](#) *Post* reporter Matea Gold on Saturday.

Politico reporter Kenneth P. Vogel also [confirmed](#) on Saturday that his outlet was one of the select few invited “on the condition that the donors present not be named without their permission.”

The journalists agreed to these conditions despite the fact that the big donors in attendance are major players in the 2016 presidential election cycle. As Vogel noted: “The network of political and public policy groups backed by the Kochs and their allied donors intends to spend [\\$889 million](#) in the run-

up to the 2016 election boosting policies and candidates that adhere to principles like those Koch laid out Saturday.”

While the Koch brothers have sought to portray themselves as [embracing of transparency](#), critics charge that the conditions imposed on media coverage of this weekend’s seminar raise serious ethical concerns.

“The problem is that the ground rules could restrict journalists from reporting what’s right in front of their eyes,” reporter Michael Calderone [noted](#) Sunday in the *Huffington Post*. “If, say, Rupert Murdoch, or even a lesser-known billionaire, walked by, they couldn’t report the person’s attendance without permission.”

Calderone continued: “So it’s possible journalists end up reporting largely what the event sponsors want, such as fiery speeches and candidate remarks criticizing Democrats, but less on the power brokers attending who play key behind-the-scenes roles in the 2016 election.”

However, there were some people who sought to shine light on the summit. Vogel notes that “a small group of protestors stood outside the entrance to the St. Regis on Saturday, holding signs that read ‘[Koch kills democracy](#),’ and photographing arriving donors, operatives and members of the press.”

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Maher : ‘ Sh*t - k i c k e r ’

conservatives don't know 'America has moved on without them'

From the NRA to "One Million Moms," Maher said, powerful conservative lobbies that don't reflect the values of the American people can somehow dictate what politicians on both sides are willing to stand for.

✘ [Maher: 'Sh*t-kicker' conservatives don't know 'America has moved on without them'](#) (via [Raw Story](#))

Friday night on "Real Time with Bill Maher," host Bill Maher dedicated part of his weekly "New Rules" segment to asking why such a tiny number of angry, out-of-touch conservatives can wield such a disproportionate amount of power of the Republican Party and over national policy. From the NRA...