



There's just one element missing from these snapshots of America's ostensibly spontaneous and leaderless populist uprising: the sugar daddies who are bankrolling it, and have been doing so since well before the "death panel" warm-up acts of last summer. Three heavy hitters rule. You've heard of one of them, Rupert Murdoch.

The other two, the brothers David and Charles Koch, are even richer, with a combined wealth exceeded only by that of Bill Gates and Warren Buffett among Americans. But even those carrying the Kochs' banner may not know who these brothers are.

Their self-interested and at times radical agendas, like Murdoch's, go well beyond, and sometimes counter to, the interests of those who serve as spear carriers in the political pageants hawked on Fox News. The country will be in for quite a ride should these potentates gain power, and given the recession-battered electorate's unchecked anger and the Obama White House's unfocused political strategy, they might.

All three tycoons are the latest incarnation of what the historian Kim Phillips-Fein labeled "Invisible Hands" in her prescient 2009 book of that title: those corporate players who have financed the far right ever since the du Pont brothers spawned the American Liberty League in 1934 to bring down F.D.R.

You can draw a straight line from the Liberty League's crusade against the New Deal "socialism" of Social Security, the Securities and Exchange Commission and child labor laws to the John Birch Society-Barry Goldwater assault on J.F.K. and Medicare to the Koch-Murdoch-backed juggernaut against our "socialist" president.

[More...](#)