



"We have Saddam Hussein," declared billionaire industrialist Charles Koch, apparently referring to President Barack Obama as he welcomed hundreds of wealthy guests to the latest of the secret fundraising and strategy seminars he and his brother host twice a year. The 2012 elections, he warned, will be "the mother of all wars."

Charles Koch would probably not publicly compare the president of the United States to a murderous dictator. (As a general rule, he and his brother don't do much politicking or speechifying in public at all.) But Mother Jones has obtained exclusive audio recordings from the Koch seminar, a private event that took place in June at a resort near Vail, Colorado.

These unprecedented recordings provide a behind-the-scenes look at how the Koch brothers and their comrades talk when they gather. They include a pair of keynote speeches and remarks by brothers Charles and David Koch, who spell out their political aims and name some of the "great partners" who have contributed millions of dollars to their causes. (The audio was provided by a source who approached the author after the event was over and was not seeking compensation.)

Security was tight at the Ritz-Carlton Bachelor Gulch on opening night of the weekend conference, which drew an estimated 300 guests. (Past attendees have included prominent politicians, right-wing media luminaries, corporate titans, and wealthy political donors.) Audio technicians even set up outward-pointing speakers around the perimeter of the outdoor dining pavilion, according to sources, emitting static to frustrate would-be eavesdroppers.

"There is anonymity that we can protect," noted emcee "Kevin"—likely Kevin Gentry, a VP for the Charles G. Koch Charitable Foundation—as he gently urged guests to open their wallets in support of the brothers' causes. Indeed, Charles Koch named 32 individuals and families who had donated more than \$1 million over the previous 12 months, yet because of loopholes in federal campaign law, their donations do not exist in the public record.

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