

RELEASE IN PART B6

From: sbwhoep [redacted]
Sent: Friday, January 22, 2010 3:42 PM
To: H
Subject: H: May head your way, you might be asked, and you might develop a response give that many firms are owned by nations. Sid

B6

<http://blog.newsweek.com/blogs/thegaggle/archive/2010/01/22/should-foreign-corporations-spend-money-on-u-s-political-candidates.aspx>

Posted Friday, January 22, 2010 1:05 PM
Newsweek

Should Foreign Corporations Spend Money on U.S. Political Candidates?

Krista Gesaman

Foreign businesses might be the real winners in *Citizens United v. Federal Elections Commission*, the landmark case that allows corporations and unions to spend limitless amounts of money on presidential and congressional political campaigns. A majority of large businesses are now owned by foreign entities, and this means international corporations could pour tons of money into the United States political scene, potentially swaying the political climate.

The biggest questions with this ruling is the scope of the term "corporation," says Edward Foley, law professor at the Ohio State University College of Law and director of the election-law program. Does the high court want this decision to apply to foreign corporations as well as domestic ones, he ponders? The truth is, the court didn't make a decision one way or the other.

Foley best explains the potential issues by talking about the electronic, video, and communication giant, Sony. The corporation is headquartered in Japan, but a large number of its shareholders reside in the United States. In fact, people can even buy and trade Sony's stock on the New York Stock Exchange. The issue is whether this corporation, with strong ties to a foreign country and the United States, should be permitted to independently contribute money to presidential and congressional campaigns.

The court sought to expand First Amendment protection for corporations, but did it really mean to promote the free flow of ideas from Russian or Chinese corporations, Foley asks? Justice John Paul Stevens focused on the same concerns in his dissenting opinion. The majority's position "would appear to afford the same protection to multinational corporations controlled by foreigners as to individual Americans," he writes.

This afternoon, President Obama asked Congress to "develop a forceful response" to the ruling. But with Congress juggling so many other important issues, it's unlikely that a change will be made in the immediate future. This could mean that foreign cash could be supporting political candidates in next year's congressional midterm elections.