



Former top official writes in new book that NRA's finances 'are in shambles'

BY JOHN BOWDEN - 08/18/20 01:32 PM EDT

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A former top National Rifle Association (NRA) official in a new tell-all book describes a culture of greed and corruption as well as a willingness to poison American political discourse at the organization.

CEO Wayne LaPierre's former chief of staff, Josh Powell, writes in "Inside the NRA: A Tell-All Account of Corruption, Greed and Paranoia Within the Most Powerful Political Group in America" that the NRA's finances are "in shambles," according to [The New York Times](#), which published excerpts of the book Tuesday.

"It has operated in the red for the past three years, despite annual revenues of roughly \$350 million," he wrote.

"The waste and dysfunction at the N.R.A. was staggering, costing the organization and its members hundreds of millions of dollars over the years," Powell continued.

Powell, reportedly once seen by some as the de facto second-in-command at the NRA, added that the organization's executives moved after the massacre in Newtown, Conn., to fearmonger about the future of gun rights in the U.S. to drive membership levels and donations.

The NRA acted "to create and fuel the toxicity of the gun debate until it became outright explosive. We only knew one speed and one direction:

Sell the fear," Powell wrote in the book. "It worked to excite the most extreme faction of our membership — they ate it up."

"What I witnessed during my time at the N.R.A. should horrify every gun owner and Second Amendment advocate," he added in a statement to the Times. "Wayne La Pierre oversees his evil circus at the expense of all those Americans who are lawful gun owners and dues-paying N.R.A. members."

Current NRA officials dismissed Powell, who was fired in December, claiming that he was attempting to discredit the organization in an attempt to salvage his own image.

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"It's not surprising Mr. Powell would try to save his failing career by peddling fiction about the NRA," said Carolyn Meadows, the group's president. "I doubt this is a book people will read, much less believe."

Powell's book, which will be published Sept. 8, comes as New York's state attorney general, Letitia James (D), has announced legal action against the NRA with the intention of breaking up the organization and barring both LaPierre and Powell from serving on the boards of nonprofits in the state, alleging widespread corruption within the NRA's leadership.

The Hill has requested comment from the NRA.

TAGS NRA NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION WAYNE LAPIERRE



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