

THE FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY WAS A LIE, TOO

I was never an Edwards supporter. Not because I didn't like what he said, but because, since he could never speak in more depth on an issue than your average talking point, I suspected all those nice things he was saying about helping the poor were false, just convenient lines around which an old DLCer could build a presidential run. The revelation that Edwards believed he could run for President even while hiding an affair only made me more suspicious that the whole campaign was one convenient lie.

Now, Ken Silverstein makes that case even stronger.

Once upon a time John Edwards wanted to be president and he vowed, back then, that poverty would be his signature issue. "Poverty is the great moral issue of our century," he told a group of students at Berkeley in 2005. "People living in poverty need you. And another thing: America needs you."

To show his own dedication, Edwards "created a tax-exempt nonprofit dedicated to fighting poverty", the New York Times reported.

[snip]

In other words, the Center may have done some good but its primary purpose was to serve as a vehicle for Edwards' political career. Indeed, it appears to be very similar to the bogus "Reform Institute" that John McCain set up after his defeat to George W. Bush in 2000, and which was designed to keep alive his presidential ambitions and reward his cronies.

Anyway, Edwards of course lost his bid for the Democratic presidential nomination this year, and guess what happened to his big anti-poverty initiative? That's right—it appears he pulled the plug on it.

About a week before Edwards acknowledged having an affair with Rielle Hunter, Edwards quietly shut down a “scholarship program he started at an Eastern North Carolina high school – a program he once promised would be a model for the nation under an Edwards presidency,” reports the Raleigh News & Observer:

I suppose there are charitable interpretations for why he dismantled his scholarship program. Perhaps he didn't want it to be associated with what he knew was going to be his soon-to-be-sullied reputation. Perhaps he couldn't fund the charity anymore because he has been spending so much money keeping Rielle Hunter in her big house in California that he couldn't afford to fund the charity, either. Perhaps he just wants to spend time with his family(s).

But the whole thing just stinks.