

***Special Report***

**Saudis, Enron money helped pay for US rigged election**

**By Wayne Madsen**

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November 25, 2004—According to informed sources in Washington and Houston, the Bush campaign spent some \$29 million to pay polling place operatives around the country to rig the election for Bush. The operatives were posing as Homeland Security and FBI agents but were actually technicians familiar with Diebold, Sequoia, ES&S, Triad, Unilect, and Danaher Controls voting machines. These technicians reportedly hacked the systems to skew the results in favor of Bush.

The leak about the money and the rigged election apparently came from technicians who were promised to be paid a certain amount for their work but the Bush campaign interlocutors reneged and some of the technicians are revealing the nature of the vote rigging program.

There have been media reports from around the country concerning the locking down of precincts while votes were being tallied. In one unprecedented action in Warren County, Ohio, election officials locked down the facility where votes were being counted. The officials said this was in response to a Level 10 high-threat terrorist warning being issued by the Department of Homeland Security and the FBI for Warren County. George Bush won 72 percent of the vote in Warren County, much larger than his percentage of victory statewide.

The money to rig the election in favor of Bush reportedly came from an entity called Five Star Trust, largely based in Houston but a worldwide entity that is directly tied to the Saudi Royal Family. Five Star Trust was termed "a well-protected vehicle" that has been used to support both Bush and Osama bin Laden in the US and around the world.

Other money used to fund the election rigging was from siphoned Enron money stored away in accounts in the Cook Islands, which was once the base of one of the more questionable and Saudi-linked BCCI subsidiaries. Cook Islands banks also handled some of the weapons smuggling financing of the Iran-Contra scandal. A former Justice Department attorney who helped prosecute the BCCI case said the use of the Cook Islands by the Bush reelection team indicates they wanted the bank arrangements to be a "quick folding tent" operation that would cease to exist when the election was over. He said the Cook Islands was notorious for not requiring any documentation for such operations.

In fact, the Cook Islands has been a favorite location for various covert intelligence activities. This most recent use of the islands is a continuation of a scandal discovered in New Zealand in the early '90s called the "Winebox Affair." In 1992, a computer dealer named Paul White bought some secondhand computers and floppy disks from the Citibank office in Auckland, New Zealand, that had earlier sold them to a scrap dealer.

White later discovered the floppies (and 10 paper files) detailed a scheme to use the European Pacific Bank in the Cook Islands to bilk foreign governments and banks for a phony 15 percent tax bill assessed on various transactions by the Cook Islands government (at the time run by Tom Davis, a former US Army and NASA research scientist who was allegedly on the payroll of the CIA). European Pacific reaped millions of illegal dollars from the New Zealand Treasury and a number of Japanese banks, including Mitsubishi Bank. Paul White later died in a suspicious auto accident.

As detailed in the book "The Paradise Conspiracy" by New Zealand journalist Ian Wishart, the Cook Islands scheme also involved several CIA operatives, including Lawrence John Fahey, who had an interest in InterAir of Nevada, one of the airlines used by Ollie North to funnel arms to Iran. It also involved William Raupe, a CIA officer stationed under cover as a USAID employee at the US embassy in Suva. Raupe had once worked for Air America in South East Asia. Another CIA agent active in the Cooks was Robert C. Allen, known to New Zealand authorities as a US agent who was formerly with the CIA proprietary firm Bishop, Baldwin, Dillingham, Wong Ltd. In addition, along with the late former Treasury Secretary William Simon, Gerald Parsky was also involved in the European Pacific Bank's Cook Islands operations. Parsky is George W. Bush's chief fundraiser and adviser in California (he led Bush's 2000 California campaign) and supported Simon's son's unsuccessful bid for the governorship of California against Gray Davis and then again in the recall of Davis. Enron was involved early on with Arnold Schwarzenegger at a meeting in 2001 at the Beverly Hills Hotel at the same time Enron was bilking California utility customers with increases as high as 1000 percent This scheme eventually led to Davis's recall and his replacement by Schwarzenegger.

The Cook Islands-Citibank-European Pacific fraud appeared to have been cooked up to take the place of other "outed" CIA banking activities, including Nugan Hand Bank in Australia. European Pacific also involved assets of BCCI, in particular the Commercial Bank of Commerce in Rarotonga, Cook Islands, a BCCI subsidiary. Michael Hand, a former Green Beret who reportedly served with Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage in Laos (and whose partner, Frank Nugan, was found shot to death in 1980 in Australia) later turned up associated with Euromac (European Manufacturing Center) Ltd., a British company that tried to sell nuclear trigger krytrons to Saddam Hussein before the first Gulf War. Nugan Hand's chief counsel, William Colby, a former CIA Director, was found floating in the Chesapeake in 1996.

The sale of nuclear material to Iraq was funded through Saudi operations in Houston, including those associated with George H. W. Bush, George W. Bush, James R. Bath, and Saudis Abdullah Taha Baksh, and Kamal Adham, as well as Lebanese businessman Ghaith Pharaon (who was also involved in the collapse of Miami's CenTrust S&L, a bank that had ties to Jeb Bush). This gang, along with Salem Bin Laden, the older brother of Osama, funneled over \$1 million into failed Bush ventures, including Arbusto, Spectrum 7, and Harken Energy. Some of the Saudi money also financed Enron Oil and Gas Resources (later EOG Resources) in the Belspec Fusselman Field in Midland, Texas, a deal in which George W. Bush had a financial stake. In fact, Saudi planes in the 1980s landed in Houston with mountains of cash used to buy nuclear material for Saddam to possibly use against the Iranians. The money was laundered through Houston's Main Bank, a bank close to the Bush family. Skyway Aircraft of Houston, owned by Bath, was invested in by Abu Dhabi's ruler (the main owner of BCCI) and whose parent company in the Cayman Islands was used by Ollie North to collect foreign money for his Iran-contra enterprise.

Another person involved in the Cook Islands bank defrauding scheme was a Lebanese-American named Samir Bashout (alias Dr. Khalaf B. Bashout) who set up Midland International Bank and Trust Ltd in the Cook Islands with no real capital. Bashout's Midland had nothing to do with Midland Bank of the UK but may have been named for Midland, Texas, of George W. Bush fame. Bashout was later convicted of beating his wife in Rancho Park, Calif., amid a nasty divorce. She claimed he secreted away much of his money. Bashout's Metro Bank (Philippines) account in Los Angeles was found to contain only \$10,000, not the \$10 million he claimed to Cook Islands' authorities. US Treasury agent John Shockey alerted the Cook Islands internal auditor to Bashout's repeated attempts to bounce a check for \$5 million. In January 2002, Hamilton Bank failed after it lost \$500 million due to loan scandals and money laundering charges. The recipient of a \$5.5 million loan was Metro Bank International, headquartered in Vanuatu, an offshore banking location similar to the Cook Islands. Metro Bank was thought to contain some of the billions of dollars laundered by the CIA and the Cook Islands International Trust Corp. on behalf of Ferdinand Marcos. Marcos's CIA intermediaries in the Cooks were Eldon William Morris, James Centers, and Dante Dominigo Agdeppa. Morris was under investigation by the Queensland Special Branch and the FBI in Hawaii and California.

Bashout was also involved in the defunct World Arabic Television News (WATN), an Arabic television network that attracted the attention of the Houston-based Arab Times newspaper as not delivering on its promises and defrauding investors.

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