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*Freedom Rider  
Bush's Arab Cronies  
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Democrats and Republicans both know how to appeal to the great mass of ignorant Americans. Bigotry is always a winner for politicians. It keeps them from having to do their jobs, and aids in covering their wrong doing.

The group that it is now most acceptable to hate and fear are Arabs. All Arabs have been depicted as terrorists, and the word terrorist is now exclusively connected with Arabs. It therefore follows that no Middle Easterner should have anything to do with security at an American seaport.

When right wing icon Ann Coulter uses terms like "raghead" at conservative gatherings, she gets applause. Of course this demonization presents a problem when the powerful are cutting deals with wealthy, well connected "ragheads."

No one actually admits to anti-Arab bigotry. Ever since the announcement that the former British Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company would be taken over by Dubai Ports World, a business run by the United Arab Emirates, howls of outrage have been nearly unanimous and unanimously phony.

American politics being what it is, very few are upset for the right reason. Does it really matter that major American ports are now protected by an Arab country? We are told that the UAE is a terrorist haven, that some of the 9/11 hijackers spent time there and that it is al-Qaeda's banking address. The arguments are unconvincing. Some of the hijackers spent time in Germany. Has the United States stopped doing deals with Germany? If al-Qaeda cash came through Dubai that is because it is an international center of money laundering and war profiteering. If anything Dubai is right up Bush's alley.

## The Black Commentator – Freedom Rider: Bush's Arab Cronies

Are any of the Democrats pointing fingers at Bush really concerned about the cronyism and the business as usual corruption that proceeded the port deal? Treasury Secretary John Snow was formerly the CEO of the railroad company, CSX. After Snow left CSX for Washington, the company sold its international port operations to Dubai Ports World for more than a billion dollars. Yet another extraordinarily profitable coincidence for the Bush team.

Like every other mover and shaker on the hot seat, Snow now claims complete ignorance about the deal that made him and his friends a fortune. "I learned of this transaction probably the same way members of the Senate did, by reading about it in the newspapers," said Snow.

The White House had no qualms about using the Snow method. When the heat became unbearable for them they said the president knew nothing about the port security deal. The reaction was inevitable. Bush got away with being labeled a moron and in the process got away with corruption and criminality, again.

While Governors and Senators file suit to make America safe from Dubai, they say nothing about the corruption that has stolen American tax dollars for Halliburton and Bechtel to pretend to rebuild Iraq and New Orleans. Little has been said about the corruption from Dubai that proceeded the port deal.

It seems the United Arab Emirates are very, very generous indeed. On September 21, 2005 the UAE gave the United States government \$100 million to aid in hurricane Katrina recovery. The State Department claims that two thirds of the donation was sent to FEMA to aid 100,000 families and the remainder was given to the Education Department to rebuild schools.

A few weeks later, Dubai Ports World approached U.S. officials about buying London Peninsular. A State Department spokesman tried to assure the skeptical amongst us. "There was no connection between the two events." We are told to believe that the UAE gave the feds \$100 million and within three weeks requests purchase of the port security firm, yet the two events are not related.

The blatant bribery could be justifiable if it actually meant something. Why are hurricane Katrina evacuees still living in hotels if millions of dollars were donated to assist them? Are schools in New Orleans being rebuilt in secret or is \$100 million lying around somewhere unspent?

Obviously neither scenario has taken place. No one is helping the exiled people of New Orleans and the cash is long gone. Port security has changed hands because of bribery and the president and his cabinet all claim to know nothing. This deal seems to have magically made itself a reality.

While Democrats express phony outrage about port security, Osama bin Laden issues warning after warning. He says he won't be taken alive and he continues to demand that the U.S. get out of Iraq and Afghanistan. While politicians fight for air time to denounce the port deal, al-Qaeda is in all likelihood making good on bin Laden's threat to conduct another attack on American soil. History will probably show that port security hysteria wasted precious time that could have been used to save lives.

If the next attack is anything like 9/11 there will be no investigation in Congress, no investigative journalism. Bush will get credit for being strong on defense when terrorism happens on his watch. His buddies from Dubai or Dallas will be sitting pretty and he can smirk and relax as he watches another Republican inaugural in January 2009. Democrats will look on and take solace that they spoke up when Arabs became cronies too.

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