

THE PORTS AND THE PRESIDENT

An Op-ed by William J. Murray

The transfer of the operation of six American ports to a company owned by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has become a major controversy, with virtually the entire Congress on one side and the President on the other. Both Republican House Speaker Hastert and Senate Majority Leader Frist have started the process of passing laws to ban the transfer, while the President stands by the decision of the Treasury Department and states that he will veto any law that scuttles the deal giving the operations to the UAE company despite security concerns within his Administration. Democrat Senators Hillary Clinton and Chuck Schumer of New York also want the deal blocked and have accused the President of continually allowing the sale of American assets to questionable Middle Eastern interests.

What is really happening? First the power struggle at the White House between Dick Cheney's economic conservatives and the George Bush social conservatives is being won by Dick Cheney. Dick Cheney is a Richard Nixon Republican who honestly believes tax reduction and business growth are far more important than any other issues. His influence continues to grow in this regard in the second term of the Administration, but has always been present. Just a few days before 9-11 the White House blocked the passage of a bill that would have economically punished companies that do business with the Sudan because Cheney had convinced the President that no social issue should come before the free market place -- despite the fact that hundreds of thousands of Christians had been murdered by the Sudanese government. On the day of the Jihad attack against us, I was headed to the Hill for a news conference with Senator Sam Brownback and others to go on the offensive against the White House and to get the Sudan bill passed. The press conference was canceled when four of our aircraft were hijacked and three flown into buildings by Islamists. Cheney wants business as usual with the Islamic world despite the fact that our dollars are financing the Islamist war against us.

Secondly, the Administration is desperately seeking ways to get money back into the United States that is bleeding out in a one-way direction. We give the Islamic states hundreds of billions of dollars for oil, but we have nothing to sell them to get the money back except equity in our businesses. We have sold them everything from convenience stores to luxury hotel chains. Huge chunks of commercial real estate are purchased each year by Islamic interests financed by petrol-dollars. Even the parent company of FOX News is slowly but surely being swallowed up by Saudi interests. The ports deal is a way to get back a few of the bucks we have given the UAE in petrol-dollars. There is one underlying issue no one seems to look at; When we sell them equity in corporations and business property we get some cash back right away, but the profits from those deals then flow back to the Islamic states which in the long run makes the deficit flow from the USA even greater.

The Treasury Department continues to stand by its approval of the sale of a company to Islamist interests that will operate six American ports for other reasons. At the Treasury Department, as with the Federal Reserve Bank, inflation is the number one enemy, not terrorism. To keep inflation down in a nation with an economic growth rate as large as that of the USA requires actions that are viewed by most as repugnant. This includes the outsourcing of jobs to India and other nations which keeps down the costs of labor in the United States as does the importation of illegal aliens from Mexico. Big businesses such as Microsoft or General Electric may not hire illegals, but the mere presence of illegals holds down the entire wage scale of all Americans and it is for that reason big business backs the presence of illegals in the United States.

It is estimated that the combination of illegals and outsourcing brings down the average wage of American workers by more than 10% and virtually stops wage growth. This is good for business and keeps inflation down - for now! The fact that the middle class is being destroyed and the social fabric of the nation is being strained is not important to the Treasury or the FED. As I heard one Treasury employee say, "If you're having trouble buying a taco in Chicago maybe you should learn to speak Spanish." To economic conservatives, dollar strength and the defeat of inflation trumps all other issues, even which language your children will speak at their jobs in the future, if they have jobs. An editorial in the Washington Times opposes the port deal; however, the voice of economic conservatives, The Wall Street Journal supports it 100% and hopes for more deals like it.

The United Arab Emirates itself is made up of several small Islamic kingdoms each with an unelected emirate or king who inherits a throne. In turn, the most powerful of these is chosen as the unelected leader of the entire UAE. There is no religious freedom and little if any freedom of speech or press. It is this unelected, undemocratic monarchy which owns the company that will control operations at our ports. Apparently brave men died in our Revolutionary War to give us the opportunity to do business with dictatorial, undemocratic monarchs. It is my sincere hope some one on K Street chokes on the wad of cash they made convincing the White House to support this deal.

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