

DeLay Indictment Major Step Toward Bringing Down Corrupt Cartel

by Anton Chaitkin

The control of Congress by the far right, and by the Bush-Cheney Administration, has been shaken by the Sept. 28 felony indictment of House Majority leader Tom DeLay (R-Texas).

DeLay's fall came on the heels of the Aug. 11 arrest and fraud indictment against lobbyist Jack Abramoff, an architect of DeLay's political machine, and the sensational Sept. 27 arrest of suspects in the gangland-style murder of the Florida man Abramoff is charged with defrauding.

A Texas grand jury charged that DeLay had conspired to hide the illegal funding of Texas legislative candidates by "laundering" corporate contributions through payments to and from the Republican National Committee. The grand jury had earlier indicted as co-conspirators John Colyandro, manager of DeLay's funding agency, Texans for a Republican Majority, and a second DeLay underling, James Ellis.

Lyndon LaRouche commented: "This is extremely important. There is a phase shift under way in Congress, which is timely. Many things are coming together with this. If this country is going to survive, it's going to have to change its ways, without DeLay. This gives the Congress an opportunity to make the necessary policy shifts—without DeLay."

There is great glee on Capitol Hill. The Texas and Florida prosecutors, along with Senate investigators and Justice Department probes, are all pulling on threads of the political control apparatus, the gang known and feared—until now—as "DeLay, Inc."

Jack Abramoff began in the mid-1990s putting together

channels of corporate funding for DeLay, who rose in the Republican leadership after the 1994 takeover of the House of Representatives by Republican rightists. Along with lobbying strategist Grover Norquist, DeLay and Abramoff coerced corporations and trade associations to cut ties with Democrats, and to seed their lobbying offices with DeLay's close allies and former staff members. Now it seems clear that their power days are numbered.

The DeLay Cartel

A decades-long partnership of Abramoff, Norquist, and Christian Coalition founder Ralph Reed, lay at the heart of this Washington power cartel, providing House dictator DeLay, and Dick Cheney, and Karl Rove, with the money of Enron and other corporate players, and the enforcement muscle of a formidable herd of religious voters.

These arrangements (which gave Anglo-American financiers a set of stone-cold pirates to run the regime) led to the actions for which both DeLay and his financial godfather Abramoff have now been indicted.

DeLay is charged with conspiring to send \$190,000 contributed by Sears Roebuck, Bacardi, and other companies, to an account of the Republican National Committee. The RNC immediately wrote a check for the identical amount for use in DeLay's operations behind Texas legislative candidates, covering up the corporate donations which are illegal under Texas law.

Abramoff and his partner Adam Kidan are charged with fraud in pretending to make a \$23 million payment towards the purchase of SunCruz, a Florida-based gambling casino cruise ship line, from its former owner, Konstantinos "Gus" Boulis. After Boulis protested that Abramoff had not paid him, and reportedly tried to take back control of SunCruz, Boulis was gunned down.

As the public has subsequently learned, through Senate probes and newspaper exposés, the entire DeLay, Inc. gang took part in the takeover of SunCruz.

The Senate Indian Affairs Committee was investigating Abramoff and his partner, former DeLay aide Michael Scanlon, for squeezing more than \$60 million in fees, and political contributions to DeLay-related politicians, from Abramoff's clients, Indian tribes which own gambling casinos.



With the fall of Tom "the Hammer" DeLay, the neo-con grip on the Congress has been weakened.

nos. Grover Norquist, Ralph Reed, and Reed's religious networks all shared in the loot. The Washington law office of Greenberg, Traurig, was Abramoff's headquarters for both the Indian scams and the SunCruz caper.

These highlights have emerged from several probes.

- May 2000: Abramoff flew himself and Tom DeLay and DeLay aide Tony Rudy to Scotland for a golf holiday, paid for by Abramoff's casino tribes and Norquist's internet gambling clients. In July, DeLay broke with other Republicans and killed a bill that would have banned Internet gambling.

- Sept. 18, 2000: Abramoff treated financial executive Greg C. Walker to a seat in Abramoff's personal box at the Washington Redskins' football stadium, where Walker was introduced to Tom DeLay, who was then the House Majority Whip. This show of power was used to help close the deal to borrow millions from Walker's company, Foothill Capital, to buy SunCruz. Abramoff has now been indicted for allegedly lying to Foothill and forging documents, to get the money. Abramoff used DeLay aide Tony Rudy as a personal reference on his loan papers.

- January 2001: Abramoff flew Tom DeLay's aide, Tim Berry, to Florida on a SunCruz jet, to go gambling on a SunCruz floating casino. Abramoff was paying himself a \$500,000 SunCruz "salary"; the DeLay team was certainly due a reward. To help Abramoff gain control of SunCruz, former DeLay spokesman Michael Scanlon had arranged with Rep. Robert Ney (R-Ohio), a DeLay and Rove man, to speak in Congress about Boulis's unfitness to run the company.

Then, after the takeover, Representative Ney spoke again, in praise of the honor and integrity of Abramoff's partner, Adam Kidan, though Kidan was a bankrupt and disbarred attorney.

The Boulis Hit

At that time, Abramoff and Kidan were paying installments amounting to \$145,000 in SunCruz funds to Anthony Moscatiello, a man identified by law enforcement as an associate in the Gambino crime family and the bookkeeper of the gang's boss, John Gotti. Although listed as a consultant and caterer, Moscatiello reportedly performed no known corporate services for SunCruz.

- Feb. 6, 2001: In Fort Lauderdale, Fla., a car stopped in front of Gus Boulis's BMW and blocked it, while a man in a black Ford Mustang pulled alongside Boulis and shot him three times.

SunCruz spokesman Michael Scanlon told a news conference that Abramoff would be cooperating with the police. But police sources recently told *EIR* that Abramoff had never showed up for an interview in the four years before his fraud indictment.

Adam Kidan had spoken publicly about moving the casino cruise ships to the Northern Marianas, the Pacific island territory officially represented by lobbyist Jack Abramoff,



Broward Sheriff's Office



Fort Lauderdale Police



Fort Lauderdale Police

Anthony Ferrari (left), Anthony Moscatiello (center), and James Fiorillo have been indicted for the murder of Gus Boulis.

whose laws ensuring ultra-cheap garment labor had been put through Congress by Abramoff and DeLay.

But after the murder, the heat was on, and the Abramoff team had to relinquish its ownership of SunCruz.

On Sept. 26 and 27, 2005, police finally arrested Abramoff's Mafia-linked "consultant" Anthony Moscatiello, and two of Moscatiello's associates, Anthony Ferrari and James Fiorillo, for the 2001 Boulis murder. The grand jury indictments initially remained sealed; and other arrests are possible.

Meanwhile, U.S. District Judge Paul Huck has set Jan. 9, 2006, as the earliest date jury selection would begin in the Abramoff-Kidan fraud trial.

Tim Berry, whom Abramoff flew to a SunCruz gambling jaunt just prior to the Boulis murder, went on to become chief of staff to Tom DeLay when DeLay was House Majority Leader. Berry left his post on Sept. 29, 2005, the day after DeLay was indicted. (Berry will be a lobbyist for Time-Warner.)

Tony Rudy, who flew on the DeLay/Abramoff Scotland golf junket, and was Abramoff's loan reference for the SunCruz scam, left DeLay to work for Abramoff, and then joined DeLay, Inc.'s Alexander Strategy Group—the lobbying outfit that had worked with DeLay, Ralph Reed, Dick Cheney, and Karl Rove to push Enron's deregulation schemes.

As Majority Leader, DeLay brought in Rep. Roy Blunt (R-Mo.) as his House Whip. Blunt was given responsibility to manage the so-called "K Street Project," the DeLay team's coercive relations with lobbyists. The better to do this assignment, Blunt was married to the head of lobbying for Philip Morris. Blunt got regular free meals at Abramoff's expensive Washington restaurant.

Blunt also came to co-manage the religious-voter menagerie with Ralph Reed, in tandem with Blunt's K Street Project co-leader, Sen. Rick Santorum (R-Pa.), and with John Colyandro, the Texas political operative indicted as a co-conspirator with DeLay.

Blunt has now been named interim House Majority Leader to replace the fallen DeLay. But the betting is that Blunt will not last long, as the pace of indictments and arrests picks up.