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## Front Page

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[Announcements](#)

[Special Reports](#)

[News Media](#)

[Elections & Voting](#)

[Health](#)

[Religion](#)

[Social Security](#)

[Analysis](#)

[Commentary](#)

[Editors' Blog](#)

[Reclaiming America](#)

[The Splendid Failure of Occupation](#)

[The Lighter Side](#)

[The Mailbag](#)

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[Official Merchandise](#)

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## SPECIAL REPORTS

Last Updated: **Nov 25th, 2005 - 22:25:55**

### Abramoff used DeLay to fund anti-intifada militia

By Joshua Frank  
Online Journal Contributing Writer

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"These elaborate hesitancies, far from being an obstacle, were like a cobweb bridge . . . an invisible passage over which one knew that silver-footed ironies, veiled jokes, tiptoe malices, were stealing to explode a huge laugh." -- Edith Wharton

It shouldn't come as much of a shock that Jack Abramoff, the infamous Washington, DC, super-lobbyist who has been accused of ripping off millions from his Native American clients, is a rabid Zionist.

Abramoff, in the late 1990s, set up a pro-Israel charity front called the Capital Athletic Foundation. Sounds jovial enough. "The pitch . . . was hard to resist," Michael Isikoff reported for Newsweek last summer, "a good way to get access on Capitol Hill, he told his clients . . . was to contribute to [his] worthy charity . . . [which] was supposed to provide sports programs and teach 'leadership skills' to city youth. Donating to it also had a side benefit, Abramoff told his clients: it was a favored cause of Rep. Tom DeLay."

So Abramoff dangled a carrot in front of his clients, advising them to donate to his philanthropic venture. Why not, it was for a good cause. Plus, he boasted, it would buy them access to Rep. Tom DeLay. It may indeed have bought them access, but what Abramoff's customers didn't realize was that a large portion of their money would never be spent on gearing up inner city kids to shoot some b-ball -- rather, their dollars were shipped overseas to help arm Israeli settlers in the occupied territories.

More than \$140,000 of the foundation's funds, reports Newsweek, was used to purchase sniper scopes, night-vision binoculars, camouflage suits, thermal imagers and other materiel which Abramoff's foundation called "security" equipment.

Newsweek also reports "these payments are part of a larger investigation to determine if Abramoff defrauded his Indian tribe clients." Not surprisingly Abramoff's ex-clients are fuming.

"This is almost like outer-limits bizarre," Henry Buffalo, a lawyer for the Saginaw Chippewa Indians, who contributed \$25,000 to the Capital Athletic Foundation, told Newsweek. "The tribe would never have given money for this."

Abramoff's clients had been duped.

Rep. Delay, who has deservingly taken his share of heat for his association with Abramoff, claims to know nothing of the Capital Athletic Foundation's financial exploits. Still, it is unlikely Abramoff lied when he told his clients that his foundation was a "favored cause" of Thomas DeLay -- for DeLay, like Abramoff, is also a pro-

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Israel zealot.

During a keynote speech at a fundamentalist Christian rally, called "Stand for Israel," in early April of 2003, DeLay used his pulpit to preach to the audience, "The United States stands for justice and that means we stand for Israel . . . negotiating with these men (the PLO) with tongues like swords is folly, and any agreement arrived at through such empty negotiations would amount to a covenant with death . . . Israel's fight is our fight: against terror, and for humanity. The United States, therefore, cannot serve as a disinterested broker between [an] ally and its terrorist enemy."

It is hard to stomach the irony. If there is any group in the US that can empathize with the occupation of the Palestinian people -- it's the Native Americans. But here Abramoff's clients were, unknowingly donating tens of thousands of dollars so that Israeli settlers in the West Bank could continue to occupy defenseless Palestinians. You can bet that DeLay and Abramoff snickered all the way to the (West) bank.

*Joshua Frank is the author of the new book, "Left Out!: How Liberals Helped Reelect George W. Bush," which has just been published by Common Courage Press. You can order a copy at a discounted rate at [www.brickburner.org](http://www.brickburner.org). Joshua can be reached at [Joshua@brickburner.org](mailto:Joshua@brickburner.org).*

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