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## 11-8-06: Rumsfeld replacement (Robert...

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### Author



### Bev Harris

BBV Activist  
Username: Site\_admin

Post Number: 162  
Registered: 10-2006

Best of Black Box? ★★★★★  
Votes: 3 ([A keeper?](#))

### Message

Posted on Wednesday, November 08, 2006 - 05:26 pm:

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld will resign, reportedly to be replaced by former CIA director Robert Gates. Did you know that Robert Gates was involved in the voting machine industry?

Gates was on the board of directors of VoteHere, a strange little company that was the biggest elections industry lobbyist for the Help America Vote Act (HAVA). VoteHere spent more money than ES&S, Diebold, and Sequoia combined to help ram HAVA through. And HAVA, of course, was a bill sponsored by convicted Abramoff pal Bob Ney and K-street lobbyist buddy Steny Hoyer. HAVA put electronic voting on steroids.

**You can find copies of the VoteHere lobbying forms here:**  
[http://sopr.senate.gov/cgi-win/m\\_opr\\_viewer.exe?DoFn=0](http://sopr.senate.gov/cgi-win/m_opr_viewer.exe?DoFn=0)

I can't get them to save to pdf, perhaps you can. Enter search terms in both "registrant" and "client" fields and put in terms "Rhoads" "Livingston" and "Votehere" (one at a time.). Then look at the gravy train while it was in the process of derailing American democracy.

I first became acquainted with VoteHere when I met a source, Dan Spillane, who is the wonderful guy that identified the Diebold source code modules for me after I found the Diebold files. He is the person who introduced me, and subsequently everyone else, to the odd role of The Election Center and R. Doug Lewis in the elections industry.

Spillane filled me in on The Livingston Group, VoteHere lobbyists, run by Bob Livingston -- the fellow that Hustler publisher Larry Flynt outed during the Bill Clinton blow job days. Larry Flynt offered a million dollars to anyone who could out a Republican congressman for adultery, and out popped peccadillos by Livingston.

Livingston couldn't live that one down, so he resigned his post as House Speaker-Elect and became a lobbyist -- but that's not all! He also launched a group called "Center for Democracy" which was going to "monitor elections." This group also featured several good old boys from the tobacco industry and some mining companies.

Former VoteHere test engineer Dan Spillane was looking into all this because he had been fired after he questioned the certification process on a touch-screen system in which he had

identified 250 flaws. It was way back in November 2002 that Spillane told me, "The voting machine industry is a house of cards. And the certification and testing process is the bottom card in the house of cards."

**But don't run out of the room to take a shower yet. There's more.**

VoteHere, a company shilling cryptographic solutions and filled with NSA types (another director was Admiral Bill Owens), for some reason claims they were unable to prevent themselves from being hacked. In this alleged hack, VoteHere claims that someone stole their source code. Said source code was offered to me, an obvious attempt at entrapment which I refused to touch with a 10-foot pole.

Nevertheless, VoteHere claimed to the newspapers that they had supposedly "tracked" the hacker and had identified the hacker as an activist in the election reform community.

For some reason, it was decided that I should be investigated for this "hack" of VoteHere -- nevermind that I can't remember how to change the password on my own laptop. Therefore I was interviewed by the Secret Service several times about this. Curiously, they never seemed to ask any questions about VoteHere, only my role in finding the Diebold files and publishing the Diebold memos.

This nonsense eventually culminated in a gag order and a letter from the U.S. Attorney to appear in front of a federal grand jury with information on all the visitors to the Black Box Voting Web site. (As if they couldn't get that in less dramatic ways in post-Patriot Act America).

Attorney Lowell Finley went to bat for me on this. A reporter named George Howland from the Seattle Weekly got wind of it. When it hit the press, the investigation stopped.

VoteHere never sold any voting machines that I can find, but apparently did set up some deals to embed its cryptography into some voting systems. We found memos in the Diebold trash about VoteHere's crypto-crap, and Maryland Director of Elections Linda Lamone shows up in VoteHere-related letters. Sequoia Voting Systems signed an agreement with VoteHere, but its not clear to me whether they ever did anything about it.

Robert Gates stepped away from VoteHere shortly before he showed up in Chapter 8 of my book, Black Box Voting, in a short bit about the VoteHere company history. You can read that here: [http://www.blackboxvoting.org/bbv\\_chapter-8.pdf](http://www.blackboxvoting.org/bbv_chapter-8.pdf)

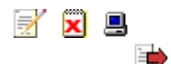
I don't know about you, but I'd rather use a paper, pencil, and count by hand at the polling place than have former CIA director Robert Gates fooling around with my vote.

But that's just me.

-- Bev Harris  
Founder, Black Box Voting

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<http://www.blackboxvoting.org>

Posted on Wednesday, November 08, 2006 - 05:53 pm:



**Catherine Ansbro**  
BBV Leadership Team  
Username: Catherine\_a

Post Number: 3398

Amazing--just when you think the sordid e-voting story can't get worse, you scratch a little deeper and the smell intensifies.

I wonder what Bob Gates will be doing for his next trick.

Registered: 12-2004

Best of Black Box? N/A

Votes: 0 ([A keeper?](#))



### LouAnn

New BBV Member  
Username: Lanbfflo

Post Number: 1  
Registered: 11-2006

Best of Black Box? N/A

Votes: 0 ([A keeper?](#))



### Jim March

BBV Activist  
Username: Jimmarch

Post Number: 131  
Registered: 05-2006

Best of Black Box? N/A

Votes: 0 ([A keeper?](#))



### Ami Silberman

BBV Activist  
Username: Jol

Post Number: 150  
Registered: 12-2004

Best of Black Box? N/A

Votes: 0 ([A keeper?](#))

Posted on Wednesday, November 08, 2006 - 08:57

pm:

Dear Bev-

Thank you for everything you are doing!

I saw "Hacking Democracy" over the weekend and was outraged. In fact, my husband was so disgusted he didn't vote yesterday.

Here is a link you might find useful; it allows you to convert anything to a pdf document by using the "print" feature.

The instructions are easy, and the software is free.

[www.software995.com](http://www.software995.com)

Again, thank you very much

Posted on Thursday, November 09, 2006 - 03:44

am:

"Votehere" is connected to a greater variety of oddball folks than any voting industry company in history.

The lobbying dollars support that: Bev isn't kidding here, Votehere did more pro-HAVA lobbying than several well-known vendors *in combination*.

Now with that said: we do need to track the people involved, but we need to track the processes, procedures and gear quality even more.

Ultimately, what we need is a voting process that is so secure, so auditable and so transparant that even when run by somebody incompetent, criminal or both, we can trust the process.

It won't happen, CAN'T without *\*continuing\** citizen oversight *even once that improved process is in place*.

If you've seen "Hacking Democracy" and reacted with shock and outrage, good. But understand: the reason it ever got that bad is because "we the people" didn't pay attention. We assumed out of laziness that "of course elections are going OK" - myself most definately included until Bev woke me up in mid-'03.

If we in turn have woken you up, good. Welcome to the world of involved citizenship.

(note from Bev -- Hey Jim, I edited out some of your more flamboyant statements.) Watch the statements of opinion about people's motivations, and allegations about them, unless we are ready to post proof. Subpoenas would be nice, wouldn't they? Folks, Jim March used to be a lobbyist, and is familiar with the amounts of money paid to lobbyists and the usual flow. The kind of lobbying being done by VoteHere was influence-focused lobbying, as opposed to issue-focused lobbying.

By the way, another big player in the HAVA lobbying, by the way, was Accenture, and I also found Northrop Grumman -- spelled various ways.

Posted on Thursday, November 09, 2006 - 10:08

am:

Northrop Grumman? The only reason why I can see them being interested is that perhaps they want to get into the election machine business. At least they have competant programmers.



**Sue Bartlett**

New BBV Member  
Username: Msfixit

Post Number: 2  
Registered: 03-2006

Best of Black Box? N/A  
Votes: 0 ([A keeper?](#))

Posted on Thursday, November 09, 2006 - 10:34 am:



Thanks for this Bev. I did read some of the scanned pages. I'm not clear on what they mean, on how they really interfaced, may have just been a cyber/security consultant using their background- BL wrote the names (he visited?) and they seemed a bunch of unrelated groups. i only saw one voting system on the one list i looked at - broward county. Although tempting to read shady dealings into this given his relationship to Iran/contra, and the Bush family, the CIA, it is also possible he was just trying to sell security software or consulting to the voting machine companies or get them to consider some level of security - obviously better than they have now. This needs some more digging.  
I totally agree that we need transparent voting systems - did you hear what Oregon secretary of state said? he welcomes the idea of open source software for voting.



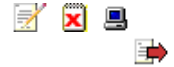
**Chuck Kaiser**

New BBV Member  
Username: Ckaiserjr

Post Number: 1  
Registered: 11-2006

Best of Black Box? N/A  
Votes: 0 ([A keeper?](#))

Posted on Thursday, November 09, 2006 - 11:13 am:



I only hope that with the Democratic Party sweep on Tuesday, people don't assume that everything's better and taken care of and then let this issue go.  
I agree...this could easily be exactly what Rove and his ilk wanted, in order to lull a previously complacent electorate into a false sense of security enabling them to unleash a final devastaing blow in 2008.



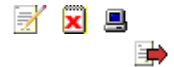
**Jim March**

BBV Activist  
Username: Jimmarch

Post Number: 134  
Registered: 05-2006

Best of Black Box? N/A  
Votes: 0 ([A keeper?](#))

Posted on Thursday, November 09, 2006 - 12:13 pm:



The amount of lobbying dollars involved was way out of proportion to their business size OR expected business size. The voting machine biz even post-HAVA isn't all that big. Selling an add-on security product to that market would keep a modest size software shop in business, maybe 20 geeks worth...but that doesn't justify lobbying expenditures dwarfing that of FAR bigger outfits each getting a far bigger chunk of the pie.

When money flows into politics for reasons that can't be explained on a business balance sheet, look out. It means trouble.

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