

THE QUESTIONS THEY NEVER ASK

“At the Senate hearings on Iraq today,” began Dr. Steven Porter, independent candidate for Congress in the third district of Pennsylvania, “Barbara Boxer of California asked both General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker why the Iraqis are not paying for their own reconstruction. I believe she knew the answer, and if she didn’t she should have. The answer, of course, was never given, nor was the really important question asked.

“The really important question was ‘isn’t it true that American corporations which give millions in political donations are awarded the Iraqi rebuilding contracts as payback for their ownership of Congress and the White House?’ And the answer, of course, is ‘yes.’

“The fact is that even before the war began, the Bush administration was planning huge expenditures for rebuilding and that the U.S. Agency for International Development secretly asked six U.S. companies to submit bids for that reconstruction. Those companies were Halliburton, Bechtel, Louis Berger Group, Parsons, Washington Group International, and Fluor. They contributed over \$3.6 million in individual, PAC, and soft money donations between 1999 and 2002 alone, and they garnered rebuilding contracts in the many billions of dollars.

“The contributions went to members of ***both*** major parties in the ratio of 60% for Republicans and 40% for Democrats.

“I wish I were making this up, but I’m not. Anyone with even a speck of curiosity can readily find the numbers at www.opensecrets.org and www.publicintegrity.org. When I researched my own book, AMERICA’S DYING DEMOCRACY, I published on page 26 a table listing the contracts awarded and monies contributed by five of the six companies above. I stand by that research.

“The farce of the Senate hearings is that everyone there must surely know how the game works and where the money goes and why. It seems the only people who don’t know are the voters who unfortunately are asked to foot the bill because they are told that if they don’t foot the bill, all hell will break loose in the Islamic world and the United States will be attacked by every Tom, Dick, and Harry terrorist from here to Timbuktu.

“Is it just me, or does anyone else see the similarity between this baloney and the ‘domino theory’ predictions of Vietnam? And with or without an acknowledgment of similarity, wouldn’t it be nice if someone asked the real questions?”