

The Zimbabwe Trust Gang In Other Capers

The 2002-05 Lowe-Abramoff partnership with Lord Renwick's Zimbabwe project, in tandem with Soros, was presaged by a Lowe-Abramoff caper in Russia several years earlier, and by a Jack Abramoff scam in Malaysia.

Russia: In the 1990s, the former Soviet Union was looted by oligarchs while being smashed under the "shock therapy" IMF program. Soros had ushered in the mayhem by bringing Jeffrey Sachs and other IMF hit men into the Soviet Union. The Gershman-Lowe programs at NED included backing the pro-oligarch Russian President Yeltsin and his allies, and funding 41 Russian parliamentarians in the 1996 elections.

Executives of Naftasib, a Russian energy company, put through \$3.4 million to Abramoff and to the Ed Buckham/Ed Stewart firm Alexander Strategies, from 1997 to 2005. Naftasib gave \$60,000 for a trip to Russia in 1997 for the NED's David Lowe, Abramoff, Rep. Tom DeLay (R-Tex.), and their cronies. In 1998, the Buckham group got \$1 million to get Speaker DeLay's vote for a bill enabling the IMF to run operations favoring the oligarchs in Russia.

Southeast Asia: Soros's hedge funds waged a specula-

tive war against Thailand's currency, triggering the 1997 Asian financial crisis that wrecked the economies of several countries.

Mahathir bin Mohamad, Malaysia's prime minister from 1981 to 2003, attacked Soros as a menace to humanity. In the brawl between Mahathir and the Soros faction, Malaysia jailed its finance minister, Anwar Ibrahim, an ally of the IMF and of the Mont Pelerin Society, on charges of corruption and sodomy. In October 2000, Abramoff proposed that a channel be set up whereby Mahathir would be induced to pay Abramoff and his partners to repair Mahathir's "image."

The following year, Edward Stewart arranged that the Hong Kong-based company Belle Haven, owned by Heritage Foundation President Edwin Feulner, hired Alexander Strategy Group to carry out the Abramoff scheme; they and their Malaysian contacts set up the U.S.-Malaysia Exchange Association as a vehicle. Feulner's company paid ASG hundreds of thousands of dollars. The Malaysian government paid into this cash stream, as did Standard Chartered of Hong Kong, of the 19th-Century British opium trade. Feulner and the Heritage Foundation temporarily reversed their attacks on Mahathir, who was brought in for a visit with President Bush. At the same time, Abramoff's partner, Grover Norquist, kept up the pressure, with a lobbying effort to support Ibrahim and to attack Mahathir.