

OKAY, LAMONT DIDN'T CRASH THE SERVERS. BUT WHAT DID LIEBERMAN DO WITH HIS \$387,000 SLUSH FUND?

In thoroughly unsurprising news today, the Ned Lamont campaign was cleared of any wrong-doing in the crash of Lieberman's server leading up to primary day in 2006. The Stamford Advocate reports that the FBI determined—way back on October 25, 2006—that Lieberman's campaign bears all responsibility for the server crash.

Case closed, right?

No. Not on the outstanding legal issues arising from the campaign, anyway.

As you might recall, the Lamont campaign filed an FEC complaint, coincidentally just two days before the whole server crash case was closed in October 2006, noting that Joe Lieberman had a campaign finance entry for "petty cash" expenditures that were way beyond the legal limits: \$387,000 of "petty cash."

The Friends of Joe Lieberman committee, and Joseph I. Lieberman, individually have violated the clear and unambiguous terms of 11 C.F.R. §102.11 in at least the following three ways.

First, according to the FEC October Quarterly report filed on October 13, 2006, the Lieberman campaign has petty cash disbursements amounting to \$387,561.00, which is roughly 8 percent of its total disbursements, or one out of every twelve dollars spent. On several occasions, petty cash disbursements greater than \$100 were

reported, as supposed payment for "volunteers." As summary of these disbursements from the Friends of Joe Lieberman report are attached hereto. These disbursements reflect patent violations of 11 C.F.R. §102.11.

Second, the report does not include the name and address of every person to whom any disbursement is made, as well as the date, amount, and purpose of such disbursement. Again, Friends of Joe Lieberman stands in clear violation of 11 C.F.R. §102.11.

Third, and perhaps most troubling, the Associated Press reported earlier today that Lieberman spokeswoman Tammy Sun claims the cash was supposedly used pay to field coordinators who then distributed money to workers who were canvassing (Andrew Miga, *Lamont Questions Lieberman's Spending*, October 23, 2006). There is no evidence that the Lieberman committee kept and maintained a written journal of any kind regarding these disbursements as required by 11 C.F.R. §102.11. As I am sure you are aware, the rationale for this regulation is to, among other things, prevent the creation and utilization of slush funds for illicit purposes. **The \$387,561.00 involved here is a sum of supposed petty cash expenditures unprecedented in any race in our state's history.** The Lieberman campaign's patent disregard for this regulation calls for the immediate investigation of this matter by your office to ensure that the voters of Connecticut can be fairly informed about the conduct of their elected officials. [my emphasis]

Since the time the Lamont campaign filed the complaint, Connecticut's US Attorney has been appointed acting Chief of Staff to Alberto Gonzales and (just days ago) ascended to serve

as Associate Attorney General of the US. Also since that time, the FEC has gone from having a quorum of commissioners that could have decided this issue (through 2007) to the point where, with only two commissioners, they cannot make any enforcement decisions. Also since that time, Joe Lieberman has been Chair of the Senate Homeland Security Committee for well over a year—without conducting any meaningful oversight hearings. Also since that time, Connecticut’s voters have soured—badly—on their increasingly Republican Senator Joe Lieberman. And since that time, those Democratic Senators who once backed Lieberman have grown increasingly glum with his shrieking support of war.

I called Lamont Campaign Manager Tom Swan just to make sure the FEC hadn’t secretly told him that they had completed the investigation of Lieberman’s bloated slush fund without publicizing that decision. Swan has heard nothing—nada—in the year and a half since he filed the complaint.

We proved today that Joe Lieberman submitted a legal complaint against the Lamont campaign—and flogged unsubstantiated accusations in the media—though he had not one shred of evidence that Lamont’s campaign was involved.

But there’s still a whole lot of evidence that Lieberman took \$387,000 and used it improperly—for walking around money, probably, but perhaps even to support his third party campaign. And we’re no closer to knowing whether Lieberman broke the law in the way he spent that \$387,000 than we were a year and a half ago.

Update: Amount corrected, per complaint, and spelling of Stamford corrected, per njprogressive.