

DOD CONTRACT GOES TO KNOWN MONEY-LAUDERER

Jeebus. First we confirm that the British defense company BAE was funneling bribe money into Soviet covert ops. And now we learn (h/t scribe) that DOD has a jet fuel contract with Gaith Pharaon.

Pharaon is best known for his central role in the BCCI scandal. As a seemingly wealthy Saudi, he served as a perfect front for BCCI, which wanted to purchase an American bank to make it easier to get money in and out of the US. So Pharaon schmoozed all the right people in Georgia (including a number of high level Democrats with ties to Jimmy Carter) and got BCCI its approval for the bank.

Well, now we're back in business with him, to the tune of \$80 million.

The US military has awarded an \$80 million contract to a prominent Saudi financier who has been indicted by the US Justice Department. The contract to supply jet fuel to American bases in Afghanistan was awarded to the Attock Refinery Ltd, a Pakistani-based refinery owned by Gaith Pharaon. Pharaon is wanted in connection with his alleged role at the failed Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI), and the CenTrust savings and loan scandal, which cost US tax payers \$1.7 billion.

The Saudi businessman was also named in a 2002 French parliamentary report as having links to informal money transfer networks called hawala, known to be used by traders and terrorists, including Al Qaeda.

Interestingly, Pharaon was also an investor in President George W. Bush's

first business venture, Arbusto Energy.

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An official at Attock, who did not wish to be named, confirmed the refinery was supplying thousands of tons of jet fuel to the US base at Bagram Air Base every month.

Is it just me, or does anyone else doubt that the money for a contract in Afghanistan with a known money-lauderer with ties to hawala is really going to jet fuel? I mean, c'mon, really. This guy's in the business of laundering money for the rich and powerful, and apparently his clients now include the Pentagon.