

The party that holds the majority in both the House and the Senate controls the entire congressional agenda. Everything from what bills are considered, to how long committees debate them, to whether bills get reported out onto the floor, and finally whether a vote gets scheduled, is all determined by the leadership of both the House and the Senate. In the past, there have been instances when members of congress, in their oversight of the President, were courageous enough, regardless of their party affiliation, to step up to their constitutional obligation to be a check and balance on the White House. In the 1970's, during the Nixon [Administration](#), serious political [corruption](#) arose and the Republican leadership stepped up and took [responsibility](#) by holding hearings and [subpoening](#) administration officials. Eventually, the President was forced to resign rather than face impeachment [proceedings](#) that likely would have been successful. It is clear that today's Republican Congressional leaders are not prepared to hold this President accountable. Therefore, it's critical that people elect members of the Democratic [party](#) to the House and Senate so that a new leadership can take control. Only if this occurs, can we even begin to imagine a time when there will be a myriad of investigations so [desperately](#) needed on so many issues...let alone the ultimate investigation which would involve the conduct of the President of the United States and the determination of whether his actions [warranted](#) impeachment proceedings.

What more will it take for the Republican leadership to finally show some integrity and hold Bush accountable for his actions? Our congress, who is supposed to serve as the checks and balances of the executive branch of government, has completely lost their voice. First, Bush ignored clear warnings before 9/11 about an impending terrorist attack. He then lied to the public about the presence of WMDs in Iraq and rushed to unilaterally invade the country after promising to work with the United Nations. Now, more than four years after the worst attack on American soil, Bush and his [administration](#) have yet to capture Osama bin Laden, the person responsible for 9/11. The Republican majority continued to be silent during the President's horrible mismanagement of Hurricane Katrina. They turned their back when the President appointed inexperienced inept buddies to the most important government positions. They looked in the other direction when their fellow Republican leaders came under indictment for fraud and corruption. And they continued to do nothing as the President trampled on the American public's most basic rights by wiretapping phone lines and conducting warrantless searches [outside](#) of the congressionally mandated rules of the Federal Court.

When no one thought that this President could push his luck any further, the [Administration](#) disclosed that they are in the midst of closing a \$6.8 billion deal to give a company owned by the United Arab Emirates management of six American ports. The UAE has ties to the September 11 attacks. In fact, two of the hijackers from 9/11 were from the UAE and money for the Taliban has been laundered through UAE banks. The UAE recognized the Taliban as a legitimate government when the rest of the world turned their back on the regime. And a study by U.S. News & World Report stated in December that the UAE was notorious for its smuggling, money laundering and drug trafficking in support of terrorists. As the Bush administration weathered the outcry from across the political spectrum for this absurd decision, the Administration continues their

support by claiming that the UAE has been a valuable partner in fighting the 'War on Terror' and that discrimination against foreign companies would be un-American.

But as the coverage continues, the true motives of Bush's position are starting to slip out. If this Administration lies to the American people about the reasons to wage war, the public should expect them to be dishonest about virtually anything. So it is not surprising to find out that while the Bush Administration is trying to quietly slip this port security deal under the radar, they are simultaneously negotiating a free trade agreement with the UAE. Why be surprised? This President, 'jokingly' stated "If this were a [dictatorship](#) it would be a heck of a lot easier, just so long as I'm the dictator." Over the last 5 years, Bush's leadership has resembled that of a dictatorship. The arrogance of this [C student](#) who maligns his opponents' [credibility](#) by calling them flip floppers, is the biggest flip flopper himself! When debating Al Gore during the 2000 presidential elections, Bush spoke against nation building, yet went into [Iraq](#) a year later to national build...which we now see has resulted in disaster.

This UAE deal once again points out the level of control corporate interests and big business have on this Administration. Its decisions are usually tied directly to the reactions of Corporate America. And the fact that the White House is ignoring its own security experts and reacting so negatively to Congress' opposition clearly sends the message to the American people that free trade and [and](#) big business trumps national security and American safety in a post 9/11 world. The Center for American Progress points out that in 2002 the Coast Guard estimated that it would cost \$5.4 billion over 10 years to make the necessary improvements to our nation's ports, and last year only \$175 million was appropriated to the program. And only 6 percent of the 9 million containers arriving in U.S. ports are physically inspected by customs agents. Under these weakened security conditions, our country should not be outsourcing the management of 6 major ports to countries with terrorist affiliations.

However, when asked about the UAE deal, Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff said that "[the United States] has to balance the paramount urgency of security against the fact that we still want to have a robust global trading system." Surely, during war time, when anti-American sentiment is at its highest and terrorist breeding grounds are rampant throughout the Middle East, a 'robust global trading system' must not be more important to the President than protecting the lives of the American people.