

# TWO YEARS TO INDICT TAN NGUYEN

Remember Tan Nguyen? He's the asshole who, in his race against Loretta Sanchez in 2006, sent out fliers in Spanish to recently registered voters warning that immigrants could be imprisoned if they voted.

He was indicted on October 1 on one charge of obstruction. Two years after he tried to scare Latinos out of voting.

Now, I'm thrilled he's been indicted. I'd love for his indictment to get a whole lot more press to dissuade the Republicans who are trying similar tactics again.

But does it seem odd to any of you that it took two years to put together a two page indictment that basically alleges he lied about his involvement in putting together the flier? For a case that, prosecutors estimate, will take just one day to try? Hell, it took Patrick Fitzgerald, working part time, less time to indict Scooter Libby for obstruction, in a much more complex case, even accounting for Judy Miller's 11 months of stalling on testifying. And, predictably, Nguyen's lawyer points to the length of "the investigation" to cast doubt on the charges.

I can't help but wonder whether this case wasn't seriously considered until a number of people—Debra Wong Yang and her replacement at US Attorney, George Cardona and Brad Schlozman—were ousted. Perhaps, too, it took Glenn Fine's ongoing investigation into problems at the Civil Rights Division to kick this into action. The non-indictment (up till now) of Nguyen always seemed to me to be the flip side of the firing of the US Attorneys. So I'd like to know why this took so long.

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# DICK'S BIG STICK AND THE DEMOCRATIC ALPHA MALE

*Well, darnit. I got forwarded the Lizza column and assumed it was recent. It's not. So Lizza should not remember the Cheney comment, because it happened after Lizza's column. I apologize to Lizza, but not that the manly men Dingell and Murtha were, in fact, in Congress already when Lizza wrote the column.*

Ryan Lizza must have forgotten that Dick Cheney insinuated Nancy Pelosi had emasculated John Murtha and John Dingell.

Cheney, in an interview with Politico, said Murtha (Pa.) and Dingell (Mich.), two of the most powerful House Democrats, "march to the tune of Nancy Pelosi," adding that "they are not carrying the big sticks I would have expected."

That's because Lizza has discovered, as if it were new, the Democratic Alpha Male.

The members of this new faction, which helped the Democrats expand into majority status, stand out not for their ideology or racial background but for their carefully cultivated masculinity.

"As much as the policy positions is the background and character of these Democrats," says John Lapp, the former executive director of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee who helped recruit this new breed of candidate. "So we went to C.I.A. agents, F.B.I. agents, N.F.L. quarterbacks, sheriffs, Iraq war vets. These are red-

blooded Americans who are tough."

Mr. Lapp even coined a term to describe these manly – and they are all men – pols: "the Macho Dems."

The return of Democratic manliness was no accident; it was a carefully planned strategy. But now that the Macho Dems are walking the halls of Congress, it remains to be seen whether they will create as many problems for Democrats as they solved. After all, these new Democrats have heterodox political views that could complicate Democratic caucus politics, and their success may raise uncomfortable questions for those Democrats who don't pass the new macho test.

Call me crazy, but to suggest that John Murtha isn't a manly man is as much a slight to his long-term service in the Marines as when Mean Jean called Murtha a coward. And one of the biggest reasons why I have John Dingell representing me in the House, rather than Lynn Rivers, is because Dingell is a hunter's hunter—a better shot than Dick Cheney, I'd wager.

Somehow, these two manly men have survived—even flourished—in the House for a combined eighty-five years. Yet Lizza would have you believe the Democratic Alpha Male is a recent fad.

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## **REPORTING FACTS VERSUS REPORTING CONFLICT**

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## **MI FINALLY GETS SOME DCCC LOVE**

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## **NEVER COUNT ROVE OUT ... BUT**

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## **POOR JUDGMENT, REPUBLICAN EDITION**

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## **WHY ARE THEY AFRAID OF A LIVING WAGE, CLEAN AIR, AND FREE SPEECH?**

Well, the Republicans have launched their long-planned attack on the Representatives who will be Committee Chairs when we take back Congress. It will get nastier than this—the WSJ hides, at least, the degree to which this fear campaign depends on race-baiting and gay-baiting. But let's look at some of the things they fear:

■ Energy and Commerce would return to the

untender mercies of John Dingell, the longest-serving Member first elected in 1955, who was a selective source of business when he ran the committee before 1994. The Michigan Congressman would do his best to provide taxpayer help to GM and Ford. But telecom companies would probably get more regulation in the form of Net neutrality rules, and a windfall profits tax on oil would be a real possibility.

Hmm. Provide help to GM and Ford? Even Republican candidate for governor in MI, Dick "Amway" DeVos, is trying to force Bush to help out the automobile companies. Not a bad idea, you know, to try to preserve hundreds of thousands of middle class jobs.

But look what they don't mention about John Dingell's legacy. Dingell is known for several things—the Clean Air Act, the Children's Health Insurance Program, the Medicare Program that works (unlike the donut hole monstrosity invented by Bush's donors)—all programs with solid support around the country.

And they've thrown in Net Neutrality, pretending that Dingell's support for Net Neutrality, which simply preserves the state of Free Speech on the Internet, is something to be feared. Why is the WSJ, a media outlet, campaigning against Free Speech. (Hint—the dead tree media aren't doing so well with real competition. I guess the WSJ's support for competition only extends to *other* publicly traded companies?) So just with John Dingell, the WSJ wants you to be afraid of Clean Air, adequate medical care for children and seniors, and Free Speech. Whew, I'm quivering from fear.

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# THEY'RE NOT ROBOTS

First Jonathan Chait and now Spencer Ackerman have escaped Marty's grasp reached beyond their New Republic home to oppose Lieberman. Chait's contribution is a logical attack on Joe's justification for his run (if surprising, given the source).

What's the point of running to uphold Democratic hawkishness when you're running against the Democratic Party and its chosen nominee? Lieberman is fighting on terrain that, from the perspective of the liberal hawks, could not be less advantageous.

It has stopped being a battle for the soul of the Democratic Party and become a battle for Lieberman to keep his prestigious job. If the idea that he professes to value above all else are really his highest priority, he should drop out of the race.

While Ackerman expands on Chait's point to refute Joe's claim to be strong on defense.

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## NEOCON JOE, THE FAILED LEBANESE CAMPAIGN, AND LOSING BY WINNING

This is going to be a bit of a wandering post. But I'm going to cover the following and hopefully finish in enough time to go can peaches:

- Taking Joe at his word

- Hersh's portrayal of failure
- On how the Neocons may become winners out of losing

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## WHAT WOULD JOE DO FOR \$17,000?

Scout Prime has a really superb post up on this WaPo article, which in turn talks about the big contractors that failed miserably in their Katrina response, but which have just gotten new contracts for further hurricane response. From Scout Prime's post:

Companies that received 4 FEMA Katrina contracts "repeatedly faulted" by the DHS inspector general, congressional auditors and the Senate received 4 new FEMA contracts for future hurricane work.

From WaPo....

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Four no-bid contracts awarded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to house Hurricane Katrina evacuees have ballooned in value from \$400 million to about \$3.4 billion, prompting renewed scrutiny from Congress and federal auditors about the disaster agency's management of the aftermath of the storm.

A review is underway into how the contracts were awarded, the parties involved and their documentary support, according to Marta Metelko, spokeswoman for [DHS] Inspector General Richard

L. Skinner.

The companies that received the contracts were:

- Shaw Environmental & Infrastructure
- Bechtel National
- CH2M Hill Inc.
- Fluor Enterprises Inc.

Despite this the same 4 companies have been awarded contracts for future hurricane work. From the Times Picayune...

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WASHINGTON (AP) — The Bush administration on Wednesday awarded temporary housing contracts worth up to \$1.5 billion for future hurricane disasters, including four to companies that previously received no-bid contracts for Katrina work.

She (he?) blamed this on Bush cronies like Bush buddy Joe Allbaugh (whom we can thank for Michael "Heckova Job" Brownie). But since the ranking member of the Senate Homeland Security committee just left our party, I thought it appropriate to see if he's part of the same nasty cronyism.