The Dirty Dozen
Bechtel Corporation

CEO: Riley Bechtel
Campaign Contributions, 1998-2003: $716,651 (Democrat), $921,265 (Republican)
Headquarters: San Francisco, CA
Website: http://www.bechtel.com/

Overview

From the most natural and essential resource on earth – water – to nuclear power and weapons that can potentially cause the extinction of all life, Bechtel Group has manipulated both elements to build a business empire. As one of the largest construction and engineering companies in the world, Bechtel Group develops, manages, engineers, builds and operates telecommunications projects, water systems, petroleum and chemical plants, pipelines, nuclear power plants, mining and metal projects and civil infrastructure projects. Bechtel has offices in Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Egypt, France, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Oman, Peru, Philippines, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Spain, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, the U.S. and Venezuela. Last year Bechtel booked $23.3 billion worth of new business and worked off $15.1 billion in revenue, increases of 75% and 20% respectively (1).

Bechtel has been involved in some of the world’s largest and most ambitious construction projects. The Hoover Dam, the first oil pipeline in Saudi Arabia, the Alaskan oil pipeline, and our first nuclear power plants; all constructed by the private corporation under contracts that have been secured through brilliant manipulation of personal connections. Since the dawn of the nuclear age Bechtel has successfully solidified its position as the preeminent company for building all things nuclear. In its history Bechtel has helped to design and/or construct 45 nuclear power plants in 22 states (2). Recent Bechtel projects include decommissioning the Connecticut Yankee nuclear power plant, managing ExxonMobil’s Singapore Chemical Complex, building an oil pipeline in Mexico, the Meizhou Wan power plant in China, the Collahuasi copper project in Chile, Space Launch Complex in California, the Reliance oil refinery in India, the Ragian nickel and copper complex in Canada and the Boyne Island aluminum smelter in Australia.

One of Bechtel’s most important programs is Bechtel Nevada which manages operations at the Nevada Test site – a test bed for conducting defense-related nuclear experiments and national security experiments - for DoE’s Nevada Operations Office which recently became National Nuclear
Security Administration. The Nevada Test site is a massive outdoor laboratory and experiment center that is larger than the state of Rhode Island. Bechtel Nevada runs in partnership with Johnson Controls Nevada, Inc.; and Lockheed Martin Nevada Technologies, Inc., and partners with Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Los Alamos National Laboratory and Sandia National Laboratories on many projects. Bechtel Nevada also works on projects for the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, NASA, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the U.S. Air Force, Army and Navy.

**Bechtel’s Main Missions**

- **Stockpile Stewardship** - provides experimental capabilities necessary to maintain confidence in the safety and performance of weapons in the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile. Stockpile Stewardship is also responsible for maintaining the ability to resume underground nuclear testing.

- **Environmental Management** – responsible for Environmental Management, Pollution Prevention, Waste Minimization, and Science and Technology Development.

- **Defense and Civil Projects** – includes Conventional Ordinance Testing which supports the U.S. military in the research and development of new munitions. The benefit of performing the Conventional Ordinance Testing at the Nevada Test Site is the specialized facilities allow live munitions to be tested by firing them at real targets. The HazMat Spill Center (HSC) – fully permitted to release highly hazardous chemical is a controlled environment for experimental purposes. The X-Tunnel Demilitarization Test Facility – an underground testing ground for demilitarization processes including disposition of conventional ammunition, rocket motors, and energetics.

- **National Security Response** – includes several programs for crisis management, which includes advanced technologies, terrorism-related intelligence and remote date acquisition and analysis. Includes Protective counter Measure/Weapons of Mass Destruction training.

**Bechtel Political Connections**

Bechtel’s close relationship with the Central Intelligence Agency helped influence overthrows of several foreign governments perceived as unfriendly to American business goals; and allowed the company to be at the right place at the right time to take advantage of new business opportunities with puppet regimes (3). Close ties between Alan Dulles the CIA deputy Director and Steve Bechtel’s financial advisor, John Simpson, facilitated the relationship between Bechtel and the CIA. Steve Bechtel served as the CIA’s liaison with the Business Council and several other organizations directly linked with the CIA (4). The ties between Bechtel and the CIA led to collaborations in intelligence gathering that helped overthrow Iran’s Mossadeq in 1953 and Indonesia’s Sukarno and replace them with the Reza Shah Pahlavi and Suharto respectively, pro-Western, pro-business allies.

Export-Import bank under Ford, Reagan campaign manger and head of the CIA under Reagan was also a Bechtel consultant.

Richard Helm was CIA director under Nixon and eventually became a Bechtel consultant. White House political advisor Peter Flanigan under Nixon became a senior partner in the Bechtel-owned investment house Dillon, Read and Company. Robert L. Hollingsworth, AEC's general manager under Nixon became manager of manpower services at Bechtel. Nixon Treasury secretary William Simon became a Bechtel consultant. Additionally, numerous friends of Bechtel, too long to list, many working in the AEC eventually ended up with Bechtel. The close collaboration between the AEC and Bechtel was "so incestuous it is impossible to tell where the public sector begins and the private one leaves off" (5).

Bechtel's political influence does not stop close relationships to people in power. The company also lets its money to the talking. In the last ten years, Bechtel has contributed almost a million dollars to election campaigns of members of Congress.

Since Bechtel remains a private corporation the company has been quiet about its connections with the current Bush Administration. Considering Bechtel's cozy relationship with past Republican Administrations and President Bush's trend of recycling former politicos, it is more than likely that Bechtel has formed strong ties with Bush. Bush's energy plan is corporate friendly and nuclear friendly, a formula most likely very attractive to Bechtel.

**Subsidiaries and other relationships with other corporations**

Some among the many Bechtel alliances and joint ventures are Bechtel Bettis, Inc – a subsidiary that manages and operates the U.S. navy Nuclear Propulsion Program Bettis Atomic Power Laboratory for the U.S. Department of Energy. InterGen – a joint venture with Shell to develop, own, and operate state-of-the-art power plants and related fuel and energy infrastructure around the world. International Water, Ltd (IWL) An international water development service company owned jointly by Bechtel Enterprises and Edison S.p.A. Lectrix, A joint venture of American Electric Power (AEP), Bechtel and Siemens to provide industrial power quality solutions transmission network enhancements (6).

*This research and report was compiled by Dena Montague of the Arms Trade Resource Center, with special thanks to Antonia Juhasz of Global Exchange, and Pratap Chatterjee of CorpWatch.*