



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on November 9, 2008

Obama's Pick of "Tough Guy" Rahm Emanuel

Democratic Party strategist and former adviser to President Bill Clinton Paul Begala has described Rahm Emanuel's aggressive go-for-the-jugular style as a "cross between a hemorrhoid and a toothache."

So, Emanuel, who served six years as a top adviser to President Bill Clinton, would not seem to embody the qualities of "bipartisanship" and "reaching across the aisle" that Barack Obama has pledged. GOP members of Congress have felt his brass knuckles, as *Chicago Tribune* writer Naphtali Bendavid chronicles in *The Thumpin': How Rahm Emanuel and the Democrats Learned to be Ruthless and Finally Ended the Republican Revolution*, an admiring look at Emanuel's engineering of the Democrats' successful 2006 campaign to retake the House.



When Emanuel left the Clinton White House in 1998, he returned to his hometown of Chicago to a lucrative job as investment banker with the politically well-connected firm of Wasserstein Perella, where he profited handsomely (over \$16 million in a little over two years).

In 2000, President Clinton appointed him to the board of directors of the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation (Freddie Mac). While Emanuel was on the board, Freddie Mac was plagued with corruption scandals involving campaign contributions and misrepresenting billions of dollars in earnings and investments. And while Freddie Mac and its sister, Fannie Mae, were playing a key role in setting up the fraudulent loan programs that led to the mortgage crisis and the recent bailout, they were also pouring record contributions into political campaigns.

Senator Barack Obama received the second highest total of [Freddie and Fannie campaign contributions](#) (after Sen. Chris Dodd, D-Conn.) out of the 354 members of Congress for the period of 1989-2008. And he attained that dubious distinction in only two years.

Rahm Emanuel was elected to represent Illinois' 5th Congressional district in 2002. Only nine members of the House received more Freddie and Fannie funds than he. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, reportedly, has assured Emanuel that there will be no investigation into the unethical (and, most likely, illegal) dealings at Freddie and Fannie. She ranks No. 7 on their campaign contribution list, just slightly ahead of Emanuel.

During the 110th Congress (2007-2008), Rep. Emanuel has earned a score of 8 percent in the "Freedom Index," *The New American's* congressional scorecard based on the U.S. Constitution.

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