

PART EIGHT

VOTING MACHINE COMPANIES EMPLOY CRIMINALS



Key staffers in the voting technology sector have been convicted of white collar crimes. While some 6 million citizens can't vote in America due to felony convictions, these particular felons are free to design and manage the American election industry. PHOTO: [thisisbossi](#) (CC).

One would think (or hope) that a private industry entrusted with America's votes would require the highest degree of personal integrity from its employees. As it happens, many of the key staffers behind our major voting-machine companies have been accused or convicted of a dizzying array of white-collar crimes, including conspiracy, bribery, bid rigging, computer fraud, tax fraud, stock fraud, mail fraud, extortion, and drug trafficking.

In 2001, for example, a grand jury indicted Philip Foster, Sequoia's southern regional sales manager, for malfeasance and conspiring to launder money. During the previous decade, he had facilitated a kickback scheme that funneled payments to a Louisiana elections official, who purchased Sequoia equipment while winking at millions of dollars in overcharges. The scheme, which also involved Foster's brother-in-law and fellow Sequoia employee David Philpot, was hardly an advertisement for the company. Yet Foster, who gained immunity for his testimony against the elections official, not only avoided jail time but was promoted to vice president of sales administration and strategies at Sequoia.

One high achiever actually got his start in prison. Jeffrey Dean’s vote-by-mail software—developed while Dean was serving a sentence for twenty-three counts of embezzlement—came to dominate the U.S. absentee-voting market. Once out of prison, Dean launched his own ballot-printing company with narcotics trafficker John Elder. They later sold it to Global Election Systems, where, readers will recall, Bob Urosevich served as president and COO, before the company was sold to Diebold.

This leads us to a crazy-making realization. Although many felons (and prior felons) can’t cast a ballot in America—an estimated 6 million citizens will be disenfranchised in 2012 due to felony convictions—these particular felons are apparently free to design and manage our entire elections industry.

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Although 6 million citizens are disenfranchised due to felony convictions,
nothing prevents felons from working in the elections industry.