

We commented two weeks ago on Lyndon's appointment of his lawyer, Ed Clark, of Austin, Texas, as U. S. Ambassador to Australia. The comment we made may have led readers to see the appointment as merely the return of past political favors--a matter of doing something for an old friend and political crony. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Ambassadorships to major countries are very important positions. The individuals appointed have a unique relationship with the government of the country to which they are appointed. The Ambassador is the official representative of the country which appoints him and the government of the country to which he is appointed customarily assumes that when the ambassador speaks, he speaks for the government of his country. The very fact of his appointment signals to the host country that the ambassador is very much "in" with the ruling groups in his country. This would be particularly true in the case of Clark, because of his long and intimate past association with Lyndon.

Thus, the Government of Australia must recognize that if their relationship with Lyndon and his government is to work to the best advantage of ruling groups in Australia, they must cooperate fully with Clark on his personal as well as his official affairs. For example, if Clark has personal business interests in Australia, it is inconceivable that the appointment as ambassador would not further those interests. If Clark has personal business interests directly with the Australian government, he is virtually certain to find that the Government of Australia will be much more concerned about guarantying that those interests develop to Clark's satisfaction, than they were when Clark was just another businessman-lawyer-politician with certain axes to grind.

It is, therefore, important to determine whether or not Clark has such interests in Australia.

One of the largest of the famed Texas oil operators is Clint Murchison of Dallas. He operates (along with certain of the Sid Richardson interests) largely through the Delhi-Taylor Oil Corp., of which he is president. One of the subsidiaries of Delhi-Taylor is Delhi Australian Petroleum, Ltd., which was formed in 1958 to conduct exploration for oil in Australia. Delhi Australian has leases from the Australian Government (leases, that is, on government-owned land) giving it the right to explore and drill for oil on some 129 million acres in Australia.

These leases are complicated legal documents which impose certain responsibilities on Delhi Australian. At a given time, it may be inconvenient or unduly expensive for Delhi Australia to live up to the responsibilities it accepted under the terms of the lease agreement. If it, on such an occasion, is able to exert powerful influence with the Austral Government, it may be able to secure more liberal interpretations of the lease provisions, which will enable it to operate more profitably for itself, but to the detriment of the people of Australia.

On the board of directors of Delhi Taylor is F. W. Denius, a lawyer. He is a partner of Edward Clark, in the Austin law firm of Clark, Thomas, Harris, Denius & Winters.

Thus, by appointing Ed Clark as ambassador to Australia, Lyndon has assured his good friend and supporter, Clint Murchison, the continuing cooperation of the Government of Australia in his oil ventures there. When Denius, or any other Murchison representative deals in future with the Australian Government, always in the background will be the fact that Murchison's lawyer's partner represents the U.S. Government in Australia, and that any dissatisfaction Murchison feels about the way the Australia Government deals with him may very well be reflected in the attitude of the U.S. Ambassador toward a wide variety of U.S.-Australia programs in which Australia politicians see power and pelf for themselves.

* This is not an unusual situation for Murchison. He is accustomed to representation in the U. S. Government above and beyond that available to ordinary men. In the 1950 Senatorial election Senator Joe McCarthy and his backers were interested in the defeat of Senator Millard Tydings of Maryland (father of the newly-elected Senator Joe Tydings of Md.). Running against Tydings was an arch-reactionary named Butler. Murchison and other of his oil cronies contributed much money to Butler's campaign, Murchison himself accounting for \$15,000. When newsmen asked him if he hoped to secure the support of McCarthy for legislation favorable to the oil industry, Murchison's reply was: "Hell, I've got ten men in Congress who are better thought of than McCarthy. I don't need him for influence."

It is hardly questionable that one of these U. S. Congressmen whom Murchison claimed (with considerable credibility) to own was Senator Lyndon Baines Johnson, of Texas.

Then Lyndon was elevated by the sovereign voters to the office of vice-president. Optimists doubtless supposed that this high-level position would sever those parochial ties. Lyndon was, after all, now theoretically representing all the people of the U. S., not just the Texas oil operators whose boy he was while in the Senate.

Not so. Lyndon's protege in the Senate was Bobby Baker, Secretary to the Senate. Murchison had a meat processing operation going in Haiti. He needed sanitary certification from the U.S. Department of Agriculture so that he could send the meat from Haiti to the U. S. and sell it here. There seems to have been some difficulty bringing the Murchison meat facilities in Haiti up to Agriculture Department specifications. So what did Murchison do? He worked through Lyndon's Bobby Baker to secure the certification. Bobby was cut in on the deal through getting commissions on all Murchison meat imported from Haiti. These commissions amounted to \$30,000 to \$40,000 per year. What Bobby Baker did with the money--whether he had a deal to split it with Lyndon--is not a matter of public record. The reason it isn't public record is that the U.S. Senate Rules Committee chooses not to make it a part of the record.

And thereby hangs another interesting tale in the saga of government by Lyndon out of big business. These details of Baker's deals with Murchison came out of the aborted Senate Rules Committee investigation of Baker. That investigation was triggered by the filing of a civil suit in Washington, D.C. on September 5, 1963. One of Bobby's business partners brought suit against him, charging that Baker had been paid for using his influence to get certain contracts and then, having got the contracts, that he turned them over to a company he owned himself, rather than the one which had paid him. (He owned only part of the company that paid him for getting the contracts.)

When the suit was filed, and the newspapers reported Baker's involvement in business interests that seemed to imply the usual theivery that's called "conflict of interest", the Senate Rules Committee immediately undertook to whitewash the parent body by "investigating" Bobby and all his worldly goods.

There had been rumors all during 1963, so hot that most politicians would turn their heads rather than be known to have listened to them, that the Kennedy brothers

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were preparing to dump Lyndon in the 1964 election. The bad blood that had existed between Bobby Kennedy and Lyndon since the 1960 convention was finally coming to a boil.

Clearly, if Bobby Baker's wheeling and dealing with large business interests, which were also tied to Lyndon through their support of him and his support of Baker, were fully exposed to the public, the Kennedys would have precisely the opportunity they appeared to be seeking, to dump Lyndon in 1964. A full exposure of the Baker mess would amount to a full exposure of Lyndon, and he'd be politically dead. And his political death would mean the end of the most effective representation the Texas oil operators had ever had in Washington.

But everything cleared up for Lyndon and his Texas friends very shortly. Just two months and seventeen days after the Baker suit was filed, Jack Kennedy was dead and Lyndon was in the Big Driver's seat. It was unthinkable that the majority party in the Senate would conduct an investigation which would heap scandal on the head of the party's own president. Kennedy died, the investigation died, and Lyndon and his friends began to live happily ever after in the Great Society.

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Back in 1963, after the bombing of the church in Birmingham which killed four children, SNCC published a little document identifying the management of the biggest corporations in Birmingham, and suggesting that they must bear some responsibility for permitting the kind of climate to exist in which persons could feel they could commit such crimes with impunity.

The document got some attention from the press, and reporters interviewed a few of the executives mentioned by SNCC. The executives interviewed did not attempt to deny that they had considerable power to affect the course of public affairs. But they did say that they would consider using such power to interfere in "local affairs" such as the oppression of Negroes quite inappropriate. Roger Blough, Chairman of U.S. Steel (which employs upwards of 25% of Birmingham's manufacturing employees) was particularly vehement in his denial of complicity or negligence in connection with the bomb murders.

To some, Blough's pious denials may have been persuasive. To those who know about power in the U.S., and how it operates, Blough merely made a fool of himself.

Blough and U.S. Steel, quite recently have given concrete evidence of their concern to preserve things the way they are and always have been in Alabama. As a result of the Reeb and Liuzzo killings in Alabama, and of all the publicity given to the March on Montgomery, Alabama's "image" deteriorated seriously. It became a matter of concern to the industrial giants who bleed the state and its people. It therefore became a matter of concern to the politicians who front for them.

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The idea was conceived, we know not where, to provide newspapermen in the U.S. with an all-expense-paid tour of Alabama. Governor Wallace announced the plan and took credit for thinking of it. The taxpayers of Alabama footed the bill (after Wallace had said the taxpayers were too poor to provide police protection for the "Montgomery march.")

The purpose of the tour, of course, was to wine and dine the newspapermen, show them the "good side" (the white side, that is) of Alabama, and thus alter the state's image as it's presented in the national press.

Whoever it may have been that thought of the idea, we know who planned the whole tour. Public relations experts from U.S. Steel, Southern Bell, the Petroleum Council (there're the oil men again), and a Birmingham advertising agency did all the planning. These same corporations and their representatives have kept their skirts very clean of any involvement in the struggle of Alabama Negroes to secure what America's been promising them for a hundred years. The corporations could not even be accused of having expressed sympathy with that struggle.

But when it came to trying to repair the damage the politicians of the state have done by letting it become publicly known that they're running a police state (largely in the interest of these corporations), the corporations were only too eager to provide a helping hand.

We'll not trouble here to recite the names and pedigrees of the management officials of these companies, who had to approve the expenditures of company funds involved in the planning activities of company employees. We think it sufficient to remind readers that they're the same type (and many of the same individuals) we've mentioned previously as being responsible for what business interests of the U.S. do to people in this country and abroad.

What the businessmen of the U.S. Steel Corp. and Southern Bell have just done to try to conceal their operations in Alabama, they'll be doing more and more in the future as they fasten their grip more securely on the nations of Africa, Latin America and Asia.

And what they don't know about the politics of conquest, Lyndon will show them.

First and foremost, that is the job of the President of the United States.

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Vicksburg, Miss., is not much different from any other Mississippi town, when it comes to the oppression of Negroes. There've been the usual bombings and beatings and economic reprisals against Negroes and civil rights workers.

However, the violence took a slightly different turn the other

day and the result was to open up to the public view yet more evidence of what America is really all about.

There is a big Westinghouse Electric plant in Vicksburg. In the past it has operated just the way industry throughout the South has always operated. It underpaid the white workers, in money, but kept them satisfied by paying tribute to the theories of white supremacy these good christian Americans imbibe with their mother's milk.

But along came the civil rights act of 1964, with its fair employment section. Westinghouse thought it had reason to believe there was a chance that Lyndon might seriously try to enforce the act, at least with respect to big companies like itself. So, slowly, it began to hire a few Negroes in other than menial jobs.

The local terrorists, of whom Westinghouse had taken no notice when it was just Negroes they were terrorizing, threw a bomb at the house of the plant personnel manager. The Westinghouse reaction was immediate.

They hauled down to Vicksburg the retired Admiral who heads their private police. He assured the Vicksburg businessmen (who'd suddenly become very disturbed about terrorism) that Westinghouse would not move the plant from Vicksburg, just because of "one incident and particularly one in which the facts are not yet known." The admiral went on to point out that Westinghouse could not afford not to comply with the fair employment section of the civil rights act, because "We can't throw away 20 per cent of our business--it amounts to about half a billion a year in defense contracts alone--because of one plant."

Thus Westinghouse makes clear its terms for complying, in even a token way, with the letter of the civil rights act. Westinghouse will comply in order to preserve the enormously profitable contracts it has with Lyndon for supplying Lyndon's military forces with the weapons they need to bomb and burn and ravage the people of any country in the world who presume to want to run their own affairs.

And there's more to it than just the profit-making contracts. Westinghouse operates in half a dozen countries. If its plants and markets and properties are to be protected from the people of these countries, who might decide to take them over, then there must be an army and a navy and some jolly old marines.

When Lyndon prates of peace, as he did before the U.N. commemorative session in San Francisco last week, the people in foreign countries who are familiar with the heel of the U.S. military, and the heel of the U.S. Corporation, must think us awful fools. Or perhaps they think of us as a nation of cut-throats and thieves.

With Lyndon and his friends leading us, what else could they think ?

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Jack Minnis