

Well, at last, the Voting Rights Act is law. What kind of law, remains to be seen. There are some clues. It's been a hundred years or so since black folks could vote in the South. That means the whole South--every county of most of the 11 confederate states. That's 67 counties in Alabama, 75 in Arkansas, 159 in Georgia, 64 in Louisiana, 82 in Mississippi, 100 in North Carolina, 46 in South Carolina. Lyndon has sent registrars into nine counties at this writing. He says he wants as much "voluntary compliance" as possible. He wants to "scare" the racists who run Southern politics--that's what he says. When these racists see that he means business--those nine federal registrars are supposed to tell the racists that--then they'll fall right into line and shuck the whole theory and practice of white supremacy.

You can believe that if you want to. And you can believe that Lyndon believes it if you want to. We'll wait and see.

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And, another thing. We don't see that Lyndon has any credit coming at all for the passage of the Voting Rights Act. When we think of all the murders and bombings and beatings and hunger and fear and deprivation during the past five years, we don't give Lyndon any credit at all. It was the Negroes of the South who passed that bill--they passed it with courage, the courage that it took to face violent death as an every day fact of life; they passed it with the determination it took to stick out the struggle for five long years when most of the time there was little hope of success; they passed it with their faith in what their white (including Lyndon) masters said, with incredible cynicism, was democracy.

Now we shall see it that faith was misplaced and, if so, toward what objective the courage and determination and faith will then turn.

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Lyndon has a new poverty contractor in Mississippi. It's the Catholic Church. The Church is operating through an outfit called Systematic Training and Redevelopment (STAR). Lyndon will give STAR \$6,900,000. The Catholic Church (through the Natchez-Jackson diocese) will put up \$500,000. STAR's objective is to "transform 25,000 impoverished and illiterate adults from unemployable tax liabilities into job-holding, self-sustaining citizens." STAR will "teach the illiterate to read and write, offer training in basic skills (whatever that may be) and provide referral, counselling and other services needed to find jobs."

Governor Paul Johnson, of Mississippi, has approved of the STAR program. STAR includes among its directors "bankers, lawyers, businessmen," etc.

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We're flabbergasted.

We can't think of a more appropriate coalition than Lyndon, Paul Johnson, and the Catholic Church.

We've said enough about Lyndon that we need not elaborate on his part in the coalition. We document, most every week, that Lyndon is the creature of "bankers, lawyers, and businessmen."

Governor Paul Johnson, whom we think of as the head Mississippi bigot, is doing his best to give the entire state of Mississippi, and all its people, to the most exploitative of big business. His approval of the STAR program makes it a mortal cinch that the people are going to get it in the neck, just the way they always have in Mississippi.

And then there's the Catholic Church. We recall at the Oxford orientation for the 1964 Mississippi Summer Project, there was a young Catholic priest from Washington, DC, who intended to spend the summer in Mississippi. A day or so before he was to leave Oxford for Mississippi, he got a message from his superior in Washington. The Catholic Bishop of Mississippi had notified the Church hierarchy that he wanted no "outside" priests in Mississippi that summer. So the young priest got orders from his superior to return to Washington. He did so.

There probably is no richer, more powerful, or more tyrannical political organization in the world today than the Catholic Church. Not so long ago the members of the Italian legislature estimated the wealth of the Catholic Church, in stockholdings alone, at about \$2,000,000,000. In addition to this, the Church has vast real estate holdings throughout the world. It is reputed to be the single largest owner of real estate in the city of Chicago. The Church has, for centuries, been allied with the ruling families of Latin America. The Church is, for all practical purposes, the Government in Spain and Portugal and much of South America. The Church is one of the strongest supporters of Chiang Kai Chek's tyrannical government on Formosa. The Church is thickly involved in Vietnam, supporting the succession of dictators the U.S. has installed there to rule the people.

Isn't it remarkable (or is it?) that with all this wealth and power, the Church has never been able to do anything to relieve the oppression of the Negroes in Mississippi? Until, that is, Lyndon came along with his grab-bag of loot. But this is typical. The Church has, over the centuries, assembled its enormous wealth by picking the pockets of the poor. It lost much of its control of western Europe because the people finally sickened of its practice of selling tickets to heaven for earthly dollars.

Oh this is a lovely coalition all right. Even its name is redolent of the heavenly reward the Church has always promised the poor, while it exploited them unmercifully for the power and wealth of this world.

Lyndon, Paul Johnson, and the Bishop of Natchez-Jackson--they're building the Great Society.

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It is, perhaps, appropriate to mention here an incident which occurred in Chicago last week. Civil rights people were picketing the home of Mayor Daley. The Catholic mayor of Chicago lives in a strongly Catholic lower middle class neighborhood. The civil rights pickets were jeered and hooted at by the youngsters of the neighborhood-- the products of Catholic schools and of Catholic culture. High school students, fresh from their religion courses teaching the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God waved homemade signs endorsing the Ku Klux Klan and Alabama's Governor Wallace. A group of little girls sang this refrain:

I'd like to be an Alabama trooper
That's what I would truly like to be
'Cause if I were an Alabama Trooper
I could kill the niggers legally.

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Getting back to Lyndon's poverty program, we've discovered some interesting figures. We've secured the names of 120 of the staff employees of the poverty administration--Sargent Schriver's boys. We've also secured figures showing their incomes and occupations before they came to the poverty war, and those incomes after they joined up. Comparing the two provides a real revelation as to who is really being helped out of poverty by the poverty war. As we've said before, the poverty war gives "culture, training, hope," etc., to the poor. It gives money to those who already have it.

The lowest income of any of the warriors, before Poverty, was \$5,500 per year. Only 15 of the 120 earned less than \$9,000 per year at his pre-poverty job. Only three earned less than the \$6,500 which Lyndon's Bureau of Labor Statistics says is the minimum for maintaining an adequate living for a family of four. The average yearly income of the 120, before they signed up for poverty, was \$13,733.

After they joined the poverty army, the lowest income of any of the 120 was \$9,100 per year--you might call that the minimum wage for poverty fighters. The average income of the 120, after they joined poverty, was \$15,448 per year. Thus the average poverty warrior, who was making twice the minimum adequate income before he joined, received a raise of \$1,715, as an inducement to fight poverty.

Lyndon may say he's worried about the poor. But it's pretty clear he's buying the loyalty of the well-off with the poverty money. This reminds us of a bit of old Henry Ford's wisdom. He once said that he'd never worry about the working class as long as he could hire one half of it to kill the other half.

Old Henry would have been crazy about the Great Society.

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As Lyndon's war against the Vietnamese people gets more and more vicious, there's going to be more and more talk about those who are opposed to the war. The kept whores of the nation's press will begin to condemn as "traitors" and worse, anyone who says anything at all against the "war effort."

The businessmen in Washington, looking for still further ways to feed on the public carcass, will be thicker than flies on a dead horse. And they're the first who'll raise the cry of "treason" against anyone who wants to slow down their profit-making, by slowing down the war. Therefore it's a good idea right now to prepare ourselves for the onslaught by reflecting a bit on the "love of country" which these dollar-sign patriots have displayed in the past.

Most everyone who is old enough to remember anything about World War II, remembers that a number of the unions demanded higher wages during the progress of the war. There were strikes and threats of strikes in the war industries, and, as always, the wail went up immediately from the bloated corporate owners and managers, that the working people were placing love of money above love of country, and that drastic measures should be taken to ensure a continuing supply of military hardware to "our boys" at the front (and a continuing supply of dollars into the corporate cash registers.)

But not too many of us remember the strikes of industry during the War. It is a simple historical fact that many of the largest corporations in the country refused to produce military goods for the U.S. Government, until that government agreed to permit them to make exorbitant profits. Take, for example, a statement presented to the resolutions committee of the National Association of Manufacturers on September 17, 1942, by Lamont Dupont, Chairman of the Board of the E.I. Dupont de Nemours & Co. (the nation's largest manufacturer of explosives).

"Deal with the government and the rest of the squawkers the way you deal with a buyer in a seller's market. If the buyer wants to buy he has to meet your price. Nineteen hundred and twenty-nine to 1942 was the buyer's market-- we had to sell on their terms. When the war is over, it will be a buyer's market again. But this is a seller's market. They want what we've got. Good. Make them pay the right price for it.... And if they don't like the price why don't they think it over?"

There's not likely to be any strike of industry in this war. Big business is the government, now, in a sense that was not true in 1942. They've had twenty years of cold war to gain complete control, and don't think for a minute they don't have it. Already the war contracts are flowing, and at the "right price."

On July 16 McNamara announced the award of a \$50,000,000 contract to Bell Aerospace Corp. for 729 new helicopters.

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Riegel Textile Corp. has a \$1.4 million contract for cotton sat~~aan~~ for use in military fatigue clothes. Oscar Mayer, the packing company, is turning out 2.6 million canned hams for the military. Borg-Warner Corp. has a \$2.6 million order for 700,000 steel helmets. Hughes Tool Co. has an order for 714 helicopters. Kaiser Jeep has a \$58 million order for Army trucks. Genesco, Inc. is making canvass-topped jungle boots. General Motors has a contract for \$26 million worth of Army howitzers and vehicles.

These are just samples. But they give you an idea where the \$1.7 billion that Lyndon got the other day is going to be spent and what it's going to be spent for. War is a big and profitable business--much bigger and more profitable than the cold war we've been fobbing around with these past twenty years.

And Lyndon has a lovely consolation for the mothers of those young Americans who'll die in the jungles of Vietnam. He'll give them a job in a napalm factory, making bombs with which to burn alive the sons and mothers of South Vietnam.

They'll get union wages, too.

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The South African Government has just opened its first nuclear reactor, with the help and assistance of Lyndon and the U.S. corporations. It's been a marvelous example of international cooperation. "About 80 South Africans /just as white as they could be, every one of them/ were trained abroad for the Pelindaba /as the reactor station's called/ staff, many of them at Oak Ridge, Tenn., at the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission's national laboratory. Tom Cole /also quite white/ was on loan to Pelindaba as a consultant," reported the New York Times.

The reactor station of which South Africa is so proud was largely designed and constructed by the Allis-Chalmers Corp. The U.S. Atomic Energy Commission gave the South Africans enough refined uranium to get the reactor going. When Hendrik Verwoerd, Prime Minister of South Africa, dedicated the new reactor station he made a speech. In the speech, Verwoerd said, "We believe we have contributions to make not only to the advancement of South Africa but to the advancement of the rest of Africa when it is prepared to take what we have to offer."

What does South Africa have to offer to black Africa, besides the nuclear power which Lyndon and his friends have provided ?

Well, for one thing it has a government. The Government of South Africa is probably as close to that of the classic police state as anything that's been developed since Hitler. South African police are authorized to take "witnesses" into "protective custody" for as long as six months. Too, there is a law which can be applied at any time permitting persons to be arrested and held for 90 days without charge.

This South African police state government has decided that there are "dangerous implications" in an experiment to upgrade black workers in the mines. The poorest paid whites in the mines earn six times as much as the best paid blacks. Most of the mines are owned by U.S. and British businessmen, whom we have named many times in these pages. Naturally, these businessmen want the cheapest labor possible. They'd like to get rid of the white supervisors and let the blacks do it all. But if the whites refuse, then they'll go on paying the whites to supervise the blacks, and paying the South African government to police the blacks so they've no choice but to work as they're told.

That's the kind of government that South Africa has to offer the rest of Africa. That and the nuclear power that we of the Great Society have provided.

Anything else ?

Well, yes, there is one other thing. It's a book. The book is published by the City of Johannesburg. The title of the book is "Your Bantu Servant and You". It 's designed to tell the white masters in the City how they can get the most out of their black servants.

The City tells the white masters that servants like to be called by their names, rather than "boy." The City explains that "in his own mind he identifies himself with his name." A revelation. The City tells the masters that they should speak to the servant in a language the servant understands, if they want him to do what he's told. And the servant, says the City, should be given only one order at a time since "very few servants are able to follow, remember, and carry out a series of instructions in the correct order, or at all, for that matter." It seems the South African black men are not computers. The way for the whites is indeed hard in that frontier land.

The City is particularly concerned about the relation between white women and black menservants. "Never", says the City, "appear in front of him in any state of undress, or allow any female in the family to so appear." All work--no play.

Lastly, the City cautions the white masters that the blacks are human and have their own social and recreational interests. They should, therefore, not be required to work more than 65 hours per week. The City says it is necessary to pay good wages in order to get good servants, and it recommends pay of \$22 per month, for four 65-hour weeks. That figures a bit more than one cent per hour.

And such is the country in Africa which Lyndon, his Atomic Energy Commission, and his corporate friends, singled out for the gift of a nuclear reactor and the expertise to run it.

Another Great Society in the making.

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August 12, 1965

Jack Minnis