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LIFE WITH LYNDON IN THE GREAT SOCIETY, Vol. 1, No. 24

We used quite some space last week talking about the way the AFL-CIO cooperates with American corporations in the "training" of Latin American labor leaders. Readers will remember we listed as Chairman of the Trustees of AIFLD, the AFL-CIO arm which does this "training", J. Peter Grace, whose vast manufacturing and mining interests in Latin America include a directorship on the board of Kennecott Copper Co. Another of the trustees listed was Charles Brinkerhoff, Vice-chairman of the Anaconda Co.

It is a proper footnote to last week's item to report that leaders of the labor union which represents the workers in the Chilean copper mines owned by Kennecott and Anaconda are planning to strike in protest over a bill being considered by the Chilean legislature which would nationalize the copper holdings of the two U.S. corporations.

The picture is really beautiful, from the perspective of the Great Society. Is it the exploiting yankee robber barons that threaten to disrupt the entire Chilean economy if the Chilean Government nationalizes the mines? Why, of course not. These industrial statesmen would never think of interfering in such a way with the internal affairs of a foreign government.

They can sit back in their overstuffed board rooms and shake their heads, and cluck their teeth, about the inability of Latin Americans to govern themselves properly, while their bought-and-paid-for labor finks do the dirty work for them in Chile.

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Lyndon spent somewhere between \$500,000 and \$2,700,000 (the estimates differ, depending on which official you talk to) to outfit his offices in the new federal building in Austin, Texas. His suite has ten rooms, which means that he spent between \$50,000 and \$270,000 per room for this little hideaway.

Of course, you've got to remember that Lyndon is used to having it good. He's become a multi-millionaire during the years of his "public service", and when you get into that class, you just naturally demand that things be a bit more comfortable than ordinary folk need.

The new federal building which houses Lyndon's lush apartment, provides an illustration of where some of Lyndon's millions came from. At least part of the building, including the offices of the Bureau of Internal Revenue, and Lyndon's Lair, are equipped with four-channel Muzak (canned music) equipment. Thus Lyndon and the government workers can have

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their choice of four different melodies to soothe them during the working hours.

It just happens that Lyndon's TV-Radio broadcasting company in Austin has the Muzak franchise for the Austin area. Lyndon (as President of the U.S.) is purchasing the music he and his workers will enjoy in the new building, from himself (as owner of the TV-Radio broadcasting company.)

And when Lyndon's General Services Administration sat down across the table from Lyndon's TV-Radio company to negotiate the contract for the Muzak service for the new federal building, do you suppose the negotiators were more worried about saving the taxpayers' money, or about getting Lyndon closer to his next million?

This deal of Lyndon's excited our curiosity about the Muzak music service. We discovered that the Muzak Corporation is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Wrather Corporation of California. Wrather Corporation is controlled by two men. J.D. Wrather, Jr., one of the controlling stockholders, is a former Texas oil man who invested his money in radio, television and motion pictures. The Wrather Corporation owns such TV delights as the Lone Ranger series and Lassie.

The other controlling stockholder is J.L. Loeb, senior partner in the investment banking house of Carl M. Loeb, Rhoades & Co. In addition to his holding in Wrather Corp., Loeb is a director of Allied Chemical Corp. and Seagram's Ltd. (both of which are substantial federal contractors.)

Loeb was chairman of the committee of businessmen which placed ads for Johnson and Humphrey in the major newspapers of the country. Many of the members of the committee were substantial contributors to the campaign fund.

Thus does the Presidency of the U.S. turn out to be a back-scratching deal among the corporate elite.

Was it ever anything else ?

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Lyndon's war against the Vietnamese people is making some Americans rich. It's always been typical of American wars that the ordinary people were asked--and then required, by the draft--to fight. It's also typical of these wars that the businessmen who supply the materials of war are permitted to get just as rich as they want to. The war in Vietnam is no exception.

Lyndon has decided that it's going to be necessary to build a great many more or less permanent installations in Vietnam--air fields, missile sites, army barracks, harbor facilities, etc. The Army and the Navy both have engineering units which are reputed to be the best in the business. Are

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they used to do all this building? Not on your life. That would be SOCIALISM.

Two contracting companies--Raymond International, Inc., and Morrison-Knudsen, Inc.--are doing the bulk of the work. At the present time they are doing work costing \$5 million per month for the Department of Defense in Vietnam.

Ordinarily such work is done only after various contractors have been invited to submit bids to the Defense Department. Then the jobs are given to those contractors who agree to do the work for the least amount of money. But this is not the way Lyndon is handling things in Vietnam. No indeed.

He's reached an agreement with the two contracting firms that they'll go ahead and build what the Defense Department wants, at whatever it costs, and then the companies will be paid for all their costs in connection with the building, plus a fixed fee for their profit. The profit fee is figured as a percentage of construction cost. Thus, the more the work costs, the more profit the contractors make.

Morrison-Knudsen is one of the biggest contractors in the world. It does construction work throughout the "free world" for governments, oil companies, the U.S. Defense Department, etc. It appears to be largely controlled by Harry W. Morrison of Boise, Idaho. Morrison has been involved in construction work of the U.S. Government for a long time. He headed the company which built the Boulder and Hoover dams.

Raymond International is connected with the Jones & Laughlin Steel Corp., Celanese Corp. of America, Kidder, Peabody & Co. (stock brokers) and the United California Bank (owned by Western Bancorporation, biggest bank holding company in the U.S., one of whose directors is Hubert's great friend, Charles B. Thornton).

Some of the \$700 million which Lyndon just got from his ready-and-willing whores in the U.S. Congress will be handed over to Morrison-Knudsen and Raymond International for the vital work they're doing in defense of "freedom" in South Vietnam. The rest of it will go to the other defense contractors, those ghouls who feed and get fat off the misery of the world.

Thus does the Great Society grow ever greater.

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In connection with Lyndon's great Howard University speech of a month or so ago, we thought his recital of the plight of American Negroes in the Great Society more or less adequate. But we thought his proposal to do nothing but hold a conference in the fall demonstrated beyond a doubt just what a phony is the Great Society and its daddy, Lyndon.

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Now we're beginning to get reports about the plans which are being laid for the Great Fall Conference at the Washington Ranch. It seems Lyndon has assigned three of his top white house assistants to confer with "experts" on the problems of American Negroes.

Who are these "experts"? They're the same old crowd--sociologists, psychologists, authors, churchmen and civil rights "leaders".

We've been convinced for a long time that the only qualified experts on poverty are poor people. And all of these experts that we've consulted on the causes of poverty agree on one single cause--they ain't got no money.

Now that may sound sort of silly to a fellow like Lyndon, who's got \$10 million or so in his kick, and getting more all the time. It's true that no great philosophical principles are involved--no great ideas of how the government can help the poor folks. There's just one simple idea behind the whole thing. Poor people will remain poor until they get a chance to get some money, and then they won't be poor any more.

That's the idea Lyndon's war on poverty has avoided like the plague. All the great schemes for helping the poor folks come down to putting money into the hands of those who already have plenty. What the poor folks get is "culture", "training", "guidance", "counseling", etc. Try to buy a loaf of bread with that; or pay the dentist to fix your kids' teeth; or buy them some decent clothes to wear to school; or pay the landlord so he won't throw you out on the street; or pay the gas company so they won't turn off the heat in the dead of winter. Just try it.

Of course, the experts that Lyndon talks to and listens to will explain that you can't just give poor people money because it would "kill their initiative" and make bums of them. It'd ruin their moral character. Lyndon and his experts always figure that poor folks have to earn money, not just receive it.

What we wonder is how the rich folks, like Lyndon and his friends, are able to preserve their moral character and their initiative, in the face of the hundreds of millions they get from the U.S. Government. It must be very trying.

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Lyndon's concern for the poor was reflected in the testimony of his Secretary of Labor, Willard Wirtz, before a Senate committee that's considering a bill to bring more workers under the coverage of the federal law that requires an employer to pay his workers at least \$1.25 an hour.

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Wirtz said that Lyndon is not trying to get a higher minimum wage. Wirtz's own department has put out figures showing that a family of four have to have at least \$6,000 per year in order to maintain what's called a minimum adequate standard of living. Working forty hours a week, a man making \$1.25 per hour has a gross yearly pay of \$2,600. That's less than half what Wirtz says he needs.

Furthermore, under the minimum wage bill that Lyndon is backing, 4.5 million more workers would come under the present \$1.25 minimum wage. But 70% of those workers are already receiving better than the minimum.

As soon as Lyndon's bill is passed by the Congress, as it doubtless will be, you can bet that he'll be on TV all over the country, sticking out his chest and braying about what he's just done for the poor folks.

In the interest of avoiding arrest under several different laws, we'll refrain here from suggesting what the poor folks ought to do for Lyndon.

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We recently learned of a civil rights law that's been on the federal books since 1875. The law forbids exclusion of Negroes from jury duty. It provides for a \$5,000 fine to be imposed on any state or federal official who does anything to exclude Negroes from juries. This is not an unknown and forgotten law that nobody has paid any attention to.

At least three times since 1950 the U.S. Justice Department has issued instructions to U.S. Attorneys around the country to report to it instances of the exclusion of Negroes from juries. So far as anybody in Washington knows, the U.S. Attorneys General since then have done nothing to follow up these instructions, and no reports have ever been made.

Burke Marshall, whom Kennedy appointed as Asst. Attorney General in charge of the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department, recently told a reporter "We could have done more with the law. We investigated several cases and concluded that Negroes were being excluded. But we never secured indictments and never made a major drive."

This is the same Burke Marshall who was praised to the skies by official Washington for his great contributions to the cause of civil rights. He resigned last January to go to work for the International Business Machines Corp., as general counsel.

Marshall gave the reporter several reasons for not having pushed the prosecution of such cases. One of the reasons was that he thought it would be impossible to get federal juries in the South to convict southern officials.

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We don't suppose there's a city, county or state or federal court in the South in which Negroes are not systematically and customarily excluded from juries. Furthermore, we know damn well there isn't a lawyer practicing in the South, or a judge sitting on a bench in the South, or a court clerk or other jury-impaneling official in the South, who doesn't know this to be true.

All of the federal judges in the South know all the tricks by which Negroes are excluded from juries, because they were lawyers and politicians before they were judges. All the U.S. Attorneys in the South know the same things because they are intimately associated with jury selection.

If the U.S. Justice Department knows that Southern federal juries will not convict officials for the crime of jury exclusion, then they can get the trials of such officials changed to the northern courts where they can be convicted. And they do know it, by their own admission.

The only conclusion a reasonable man can reach, we think, is that Lyndon intends for Negroes to continue being excluded from juries in the South. Else he would instruct the Great John Doar, present Asst. Attorney General of the Civil Rights Division, to prosecute southern officials wholesale for this federal crime.

Lyndon does some of his most eloquent hee-hawing about equality before the law. But Negroes won't be equal before the law, until they serve, without restriction, on all juries.

What would a farmer do with even a prize jackass who thought his hee-haw was so lovely that he should be excused from all duties so he could devote his full time to filling the air with sound?

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As we write, word comes that Adlai Stevenson dropped dead today in London. He will no doubt be mourned by those he served as U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., and by his family.

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July 15, 1965  
Jack Minnis

U.C.B.

Western Bancorporation