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LIFE WITH LYNDON IN THE GREAT SOCIETY, Vol.1, No. 34

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The Mississippi Challenge is over. It failed to secure representation for Mississippi Negroes in the House of Representatives, as it had failed to secure that representation in the Democratic National Convention. It failed, not because Mississippi Negroes didn't know how to handle themselves in politics, not because the members of the House didn't understand the issues, or weren't fully informed, not because the people of the United States were kept from knowing what was going on (for they have little effective voice in what is done in Washington). The challenge failed (who can dispute it?) because the words of Frederick Douglass, spoken to white America 113 years ago, are as true today as then:

"...your celebration is a sham; your boasted liberty, an unholy license; your national greatness, swelling vanity, your sounds of rejoicing are empty and heartless; your denunciation of tyrants, brass fronted impudence; your shouts of liberty and equality, hollow mockery...a thin veil to cover up crimes which would disgrace a nation of savages. There is not a nation on earth guilty of practices more shocking and bloody than are the people of the United States, at this very hour."

Omar Burleson, chairman of the Committee on House Administration, wrapped it all up very neatly when, explaining why the Committee recommended dismissal of the challenge, he said: "...all of the contestants in this case contend that Negroes have been systematically excluded from registering and voting in the State of Mississippi. But even if these charges are true I say to you, this House in the past has refused to declare a seat vacant where large numbers of voters were known to be illegally disfranchised." (emphasis added)

So much for the constitution of the U.S., the courts, the judges, the senators and representatives, and all the rest of the machinery which stands behind and enforces the laws of the United States. By their own measure they are a fraud.

Such is the example which Lyndon's Great Society sets before the world.

It sets other examples too.

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How about this example? Phoen Thi Que was the seven-month-old daughter of a Vietnamese peasant. Her village was attacked by the U.S. Marines and the U.S. Air Force, with artillery fire and bombs, in what our military chieftains call a "softening up" operation preparatory to a ground attack. The military suspected there might be some guerillas in the village. Phoen Thi Que was taken by her father to a makeshift bomb shelter, a hole in the ground. There she stayed for six days, without food or water, while the forces of freedom prepared village for the attack by ground troops. Phoen Thi Que died of starvation because there was no food for her in the hole in the ground, to which she had been driven by American bombs.

Meanwhile, in New York City, two girls were attending a fashion show. They were somewhat older than Phoen Thi Que. Their names---Anne and Charlotte Ford, daughters of Henry Ford II. Their dresses were designed by Correges of Paris. They were at the Bergdorf-Goodman fashion show to inspect the creations of various other designers. The president of Bergdorf's stopped to chat with them. He asked if they had seen the fall line of another designer in Paris. They replied they hadn't and asked what the clothes were like. He said: "I'll show you later. I have four of his beauties in ready-to-wear."

Thus while the daughter of a Vietnamese peasant starves to death in a foxhole, the daughters of an American automobile magnate flit from the shops of Paris designers to the fashionable salons of New York-- their great concern, apparently, being to outdress the other females of the American Corporate Empire.

Now, clearly, it takes little or no money to starve to death in a Vietnamese foxhole. But it takes a considerable amount of money to live as the Ford girls do. Where does the money come from? Obviously, it comes from the Ford Empire. This, presumably, means the sale of automobiles. But it also means the sale of other things. On August 7, 1965, the Ford Motor Co., said it had received a contract from the U.S. Government for the production of warhead fuzing and arming devices. How many Ford-made fuses detonated the bombs and shells which kept Phoen Thi Que in the foxhole until she starved to death? Since June 15 of this year, the Ford Motor Co. has received \$72,004,067 in contracts for supplying military goods to U.S. Armed Forces. Those goods will be used to kill, or cause the death of, countless Phoen Thi Que's as the U.S. march for freedom continues in South Viet Nam.

And the profits will continue to roll into the Ford bank accounts, where they can be used for such

historic purposes as adorning the bodies of Ford women, and providing them with the leisure to enjoy the Great Society.

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Here's another example of what the Great Society sets before the world. In late July Lyndon was complaining of a sore arm. He had been bowling at his private alley at Camp David. "I challenged Bob McNamara," he said, "and I guess as most of you know that was a mistake--for both him and me. Under the McNamara influence, my bowling score was--shall we say--reduced considerably."

On September 11, Dr. Howard Rusk, of New York University's Institute of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, was in Saigon at Lyndon's request, to survey the work of private welfare agencies and see how it could be expanded. Dr. Rusk bent over a boy with a stump of an arm wrapped in bandages. "There are 10,000 to 25,000 of these people--we really don't know how many," he said. All are victims of the war and nothing is being done about making them able to pursue useful lives." He turned to the Vietnamese doctor and said, "Tell him we're going to get him a new arm."

After touring several areas in Vietnam, Rusk said he would institute a "crash program to equip all disabled persons in Vietnam with artificial limbs." This would be done, he said, with funds raised from the voluntary contribution of Americans.

So, while Lyndon worries with an arm made sore by bowling with his Secretary of Defense, his military agents in Vietnam are destroying, wholesale, the limbs of the Vietnamese people. And Lyndon, in his infinite compassion, sends a doctor over to see what can be done about securing artificial arms for his victims in Vietnam, both those he's already maimed, and those he'll maim in the future as his military effort becomes more and more effective. Lyndon uses the full police power of the Great Society to collect taxes from the people in order to finance his military operations. But he leaves to "voluntary contributions" the raising of the funds necessary for repairing part of the damage he'd done.

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The Washington Post reports that, during the past ten years, U.S. manufacturers have sold more than \$20 billion worth of military hardware to foreign countries. Since that amount of money is a little hard to compare with anything, we thought it would be a good idea to break it down, so folks could get a clearer idea just

how much money the Corporate Empire makes out of providing the weapons with which to keep the empire secure. The figure quoted above comes to \$234,082 per hour, every hour of every day, for ten years. And it's important to understand that the people of the U.S. are taxed to provide this money. The money is then either given or lent to foreign countries, and they, in turn, use the money to buy the weapons of war from American manufacturers.

It's pretty hard to say just how much profit each of the U.S. weapons manufacturers off military orders. (And it's to be remembered that the companies who do this kind of business are the largest and most powerful of American corporations--General Motors, Dupont, Ford, U.S. Steel, American Telephone and Telegraph, Standard Oil, etc.) However, Secretary of Defense McNamara reported just last week, that "arms and military equipment sales will provide nearly \$1 billion in profit to U.S. industry" during the current fiscal year.

The same newspapers which reported McNamara's statement also reported that Lyndon is terribly concerned about preserving peace. One supposes he means preserving it in those areas of the world where the U.S. does not presently have wars underway.

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We've not said anything about the Dominican Republic and Lyndon's involvement there for some time. We've been watching and waiting. Now, one item of information from the Latin American Times makes it seem that things are clearing up a bit. The Times reports that Garcia Godoy, the new president whom Lyndon just authorized to govern the people of the Republic, intends to implement a program of land reform. The Times rather coyly suggests that the land reform program will "run head-on into the South Puerto Rican Sugar Co., that owns a considerable amount of land in La Romana, considered the world's largest sugar mill." The Times adds that Lyndon's Agency for International Development will "play the key role in deciding where the money will go." It speaks of the \$47,000,000 in U.S. aid which Lyndon is providing for the Republic.

You'd have to be pretty foolish, wouldn't you, to suppose that Lyndon is going to let that money be spent in such a way that it would damage the operations of the South Puerto Rican Sugar Co.--one of the Rockefeller's more profitable Latin American operations?

If we were among those who overthrew the military junta, and are now being told that they should turn in their weapons to the Garcia-Godoy Government, we think we would sit on them a while and see what develops.

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Lyndon's Office of Education says it has finally decided that it should try to cut off federal funds from those 80-odd school systems in the South which have refused to send in compliance agreements. There'll be hearings held in Washington, at the Office of Education, where the school systems will be required to show cause why federal funds should not be suspended. As we understand it, the only funds involved in these hearings are the funds available under the 1965 education act. The funds distributed to segregated school systems under the 94 other federal programs are not involved. The Alabama Counties of Barbour, Bibb and Wilcox, and the Tarrant City, Ala., school district, will have their hearings on October 6 and 7. Supposedly, if these school systems are not able to show satisfactory cause, they'll be unable to get any money under the new education act.

But, as usual, there's a joker in the deck. The fact is that the Alabama state board of education has already been given the funds for which Alabama qualifies under the act. The Alabama board is not supposed to let these non-complying counties have any of the money until it gets word from Lyndon's Office of Education that everything's all right. That may satisfy Lyndon, but we've got to point out that Governor Wallace is still running the State of Alabama, and don't think for one minute that doesn't mean he's running the Alabama School Systems.

We don't believe that Governor Wallace is going to deny that federal money to the four school systems which have refused to file compliance statements. We're confident he can find a way to let them have it. And that he will do so. And that Lyndon and his Office of Education won't do a damn thing about it.

Of course, what goes for Alabama, goes for Mississippi and the other states where there are school systems which have not complied. The State Boards have the money; Lyndon has turned it loose to them. Title VI of the civil rights act of 1964 was a lovely piece of paper. We understand it's being used as toilet paper in some of the poorer Southern capitols.

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We heard some cries of anguished surprise when it was announced that the Lowndes County Grand Jury had indicted T.L. Coleman for manslaughter (instead of murder) for the killing of Jonathan Daniels and for assault and battery for the shooting of Richard Morrisroe. We're hard put to understand why anyone would have expected

anything else. The grand jury that voted the indictments was selected by a jury commission the members of which are appointees of Governor Wallace. Since when did we have reason to believe that Wallace considers it a crime to kill a civil rights worker? And we'll repeat here that that's the same Wallace who runs the Alabama School Systems, to which Lyndon's Office of Education has given \$36 million or so under the 1965 education act.

* There's another thing we can expect, too. If and when the federal funds are formally denied to the non-complying counties, it's almost certain that Lyndon's Office of Education will then begin bragging that "only" 80 or so school systems out of several thousand have refused to comply with the civil rights act. But what we want to remember is that those school systems which have satisfied the Office of Education by filing some kind of "desegregation plan" or other, have only filed a piece of paper. The persons who run those schools are the same ones who have been running them all along and we have no reason to suppose they intend to do anything more about desegregation or equal education than they have in the past. It's reasonable to suppose they'd be willing to sign a little old piece of paper in order to get their hands on the hundreds of thousands of dollars that'll be coming to them under the 1965 Act.

And that's all Lyndon's asking them to do.

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