

Friendly Ford

A number of President Gerald Ford's closest friends are lobbyists for some of the biggest corporations in the United States.

One former lobbyist, Robert Winter-Berger, gave evidence before the House Judiciary Committee's hearings when Ford was nominated to be Vice President in October, 1973. The evidence presented indicated how friendships could develop between politician Ford and the lobbyists.

Winter-Berger testified that he had personally paid Ford \$15,000 for various favours over a five year period and, in return for still more favours, had channelled \$125,000 to finance Republican Party campaigns at the request of Ford.

Before testifying to the House committee, Winter-Berger had detailed his accusations against Ford in a book called the Washington Payoff in which he tells of his activities as a Washington lobbyist. He also told of his payments to Ford in a signed affidavit which was used as the basis of an October 1973 newspaper article dealing with Ford's openness to political payoffs.

This affidavit, in addition to the Washington Payoff, was submitted as evidence to the Judiciary Committee. The House at that time wanted a replacement for Siro Agnew, aware of the fact that the person chosen might someday have to replace Richard Nixon. Ford, as a 25-year veteran of the House was "one of their own" and, as a result, most of the time questioning Winter-Berger was spent trying to discredit his testimony against Ford.

Winter-Berger explained, though, that a man named Nathan Voloshen gave him most of the \$15,000 which he passed on to Ford. Voloshen, in return, would have an "in" with the then House minority leader. "What Nathan Voloshen was doing," said Winter-Berger, "was buying what he thought was an ear at court...There was a lot in it for him...if Jerry Ford became Speaker of the House, and if I knew Jerry Ford."

Another particularly interesting case involved a Dutch doctor, Alfred Buytendorp, who purchased Winter-Berger's assistance to help find a legal loophole to remain in the U.S. Buytendorp paid Winter-Berger \$2,000 for his services and between February and May, 1968, Ford and Winter-Berger were in almost constant communication on the matter.

Winter-Berger submitted to the Judiciary Committee a dozen letters written to him by Ford, explaining the activities Ford was involved

in on behalf of Buytendorp. In one of the letters Ford urged, "don't hesitate to contact us here if we need to lend a hand."

Finally, the efforts paid off and the case was resolved in favour of Buytendorp. At that time Ford sent a letter to Winter-Berger, dated May 20, 1968, saying, "You will be relieved, I know, and I am delighted that all went well after the General Consul had his personal attention called to the case."

Ford added, "It has been a pleasure for me to get this worked out for you. It's really been like a game of chess, hasn't it?" The letter was signed, "Warmest personal regards, Jerry."

Since all the payments to Ford were made in cash there were no records that he had received money from Winter-Berger, though there was documented evidence that he had intervened in the Buytendorp case. The Judiciary Committee, perhaps sensitive to its own relationships with Washington lobbyists, attacked Winter-Berger's lack of documentation. With it being his word against that of Gerald Ford, the 38 people on the Judiciary Committee were more than willing to accept the word of "one of their own."

Ford still numbers among his friends the lobbyists and executives of such companies

as Ford Motor Company, Procter and Gamble, and United States Steel.

Another important Ford friend in business is from his home town of Grand Rapids, Michigan and is already working on the White House staff. Philip W. Buchen has been named White House counsel. Before being hired by Ford, Buchen was a partner in the law firm of Law, Buchen, Wethers, Richardson and Dutcher. Among the firm's clients are Brunswick Corporation, the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway Company and Ford Motor Company and United States Steel.

Stark Ritchie, Chief General Counsel of the American Petroleum Institute and John F. Mills of the Tobacco Institute Inc., are others considered to have a direct line to Ford's ear.

Even before Ford took office, William G. Whyte, Vice-President of United States Steel and the company's top man in Washington, hosted a "Presidential transition" party at his home. Among the guests were Philip W. Buchen and Bryce N. Harlow of Procter and Gamble.

Commenting on the extraordinary number of Ford's lobbyist friends, one corporate executive said, "There are probably 1,000 guys who would say they are Jerry Ford's friend."

Senator Forsey Marches for Chileans

Newfoundland Liberal Senator Eugene Forsey was one of fifty people demonstrating in Ottawa last Wednesday against the Chilean junta.

Forsey is one of Canada's leading constitutional experts and is a former CCF member. He was appointed to the senate by the Liberal Government in 1970.

Wednesday, however, saw him out of the senate chambers buffeting the cold and the four police onlookers with the other demonstrators in front of the Chilean Embassy on Ottawa's Sparks Street. "I'm here for the same reason everyone else is. I'd like to see civil liberties and democracy restored in Chile," he said.

When asked why other Senate members or M.P.'s weren't present, Forsey said he didn't really know but that most of them are still out of town.

"I know there is a certain amount of sympathy for the cause. A couple of senators would have been here if they hadn't been away and Andrew Brewin (MP for

Greenwood) would be here except he is in Toronto. Ed Broadbent was going to be here but must have got tied up somewhere."

"Forsey hopes the Canadian government allows more Chilean refugees into the country and says there are more here than the figures generally quoted.

He hopes to bring the whole question of Chile up at the next sitting of Parliament. "I'll certainly be making some more speeches on the topic and think some of the other senators will also. Several did last time around."

He also said that Canada didn't cut off or decrease aid to Chile during Allende's presidency and says he feels the Canadian government should continue with foreign aid to the Chilean people.

"We give money now to all countries, communist, dictatorship, democracy and think we should continue to do so because the people of the country need it for food — it is they who count."

And with that he hefted his sign and continued his rounds.

Dialogue

In 1968 or 1969, if I had called the United States "imperialist aggressor", I probably would have had the R.C.M.P. in the GAZETTE offices checking on my service record, or something, in the interests of "national security". The **Chronically Terrible** would have reprinted a nasty editorial that the **Vox Medica** would have written about me, and some smart-ass Law students would have put out a special edition of the **Ansuls, mimicing my writing style** (a difficult task, I assure you). Commerce students would have called me, "Commie", and my phone would probably have been tapped.

In 1972, if I had mumbled or changed the same phrase, Toronto freaks would have called me another Maritime laggard, ten years behind the rest of Canada in working towards the "Revolution". Fellow students would probably have started looking for my bundle of **People's Canada Daily News** and steeled themselves for the great hard-sell they could expect to follow. **The Fourth Estate**, by that time, would have begun to have doubts about publishing any letter I wrote, without first having their lawyers check it out. The Nova Scotia government would have harassed me from the province, because I would have been a danger to tourist revenues from American "friends".

But times have changed in Halifax. Just last Saturday I read in the **Chronically Terrible's** evening reprint the following items:

"Congress, the press, presidential candidates — all have consistently shied away from this subject. Supposed liberals have pleaded the supposed need to be 'hard-nosed'. The real need is to face the fact that gangster schemes of bribery, violence and even assassination are being carried out in the name of the American people."

The "subject" that the author was referring to was the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, and its involvement in the overthrow of the democratically-elected socialist government of Salvador Allende of Chile. The article wasn't even buried on page 10, which usually happens with anti-American copy, but was carried on page 6, the editorial page (perhaps the editors thought there was less likelihood of it being read there). But by far the most interesting part of this whole story was that the Article wasn't even written by a fire-breathing, left-wing orator. Believe it or not, the item was written by none other than Tom Wicker, agent of the peoples' enemy **The New York Times News Service**.

Now it is only fitting that in Canada an American criticize his own country, because, after all, fair is fair. Even CTV's say-nothing-courtesy-of-Imperial Oil editorialist, Tom Gould, didn't really "offend" when he suggested two weeks ago that the CIA had this bad habit of always having its blunders exposed by the American press, and that their internal organization must be very shoddy, indeed.

Gould's approach was, naturally, laughable. Last year, when the American left-wing was saying that the United States was behind the overthrow of Allende, Gould never opened his mouth on the subject, save to expostulate on the number of dead babies and (Tsk, tsk) wasn't the butchery in Chile a shame? On, yes, and he slapped Mitchell Sharpe's wrist for moving with such unseemly haste in recognizing the new fascist regime that replaced Allende. But other than that, the thought of the American government, that bastion of democracy and defender of the free-enterprise world, being involved in the plot to overthrow Allende was unthinkable to editorialists of Gould's calibre.

Last year, one can even remember the **Chronically Terrible** taking the editorial stand that Canada should not even accept the Chilean refugees until it could be verified (presumably by Interpol, the F.B.I. or the C.I.A.) that the refugee was a true-blue free-enterpriser. But now, for the local daily to print the American admission of complicity in the less-than-legal affairs of a corrupt military dictatorship is for the **Herald** boys to admit something, indeed. And there wasn't even a new star in the sky last Saturday.

But the whole article on Chile is irrelevant, anyway. Everyone with common sense knew of the CIA's involvement in Chile, just as the know about the CIA's involvement in Cyprus. Wicker's column is just a double confirmation of the fact. Perhaps Wicker's column acts as a testimonial to freedom of the American press and its willingness to prove something about America, regardless of what their corrupt leadership might wish to show the world. But then, perhaps even that statement is anointing sainthood when it isn't really due.

On Saturday, **The Globe and Mail** printed excerpts from Charles Taylor's just-released book, *Snow Job: Canada, the United States and Vietnam, 1954-1973*. In the book, Taylor outlines Canada's complicity in Vietnam, a role that our government has consistently denied. The fact that the book is being printed ten years after the fact is not the point. What is important is that Canada wainvolved with Americans in imperialist, aggressive activities, while supposedly acting as the great world "peacemaker". What will probably happen is that, in 1984, someone will write a book on the Canadian part in the overthrow of Allende's regime. I'm taking bets now, but I bet I'll have few takers.