

## Reuben Askew is not 'Mr. Clean'

*The Carter administration's appointments this summer in the area of trade underline the fact that the noises the administration continues to make about launching a U.S. export drive are largely PR for the credulous. The three relevant appointments are:*

- the August appointment of former Florida governor Reuben Askew to Robert Strauss's important post of Special Trade Negotiator, a job whose main requirement these days appears to be a propensity to bully America's trading partners;
- the June appointment of Luther Hodges, Jr. as

### WORLD TRADE

*Undersecretary of Commerce, the number-two post in that department;*

- the July appointment of deputy trade negotiator Alonzo McDonald as staff director at the White House.

*Each of these figures may be expected to play a significant and pernicious role in implementing the Council on Foreign Relations' strategy for "controlled disintegration" of the U.S. and world economy by using the United States for trade war directed against those countries—such as France, Germany, Mexico, Japan, and the Soviet Union—favoring dirigist nuclear-power and industrial development policies. We discuss one of the appointees, Reuben Askew, below.*

Reuben Askew, to replace Robert Strauss as Special Trade Negotiator, was set up at the beginning of the 1970s as a leading "New South" liberal by the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) circles who created Jimmy Carter at the time. Indicative of the circumstances is a March 5, 1972 *New York Times Magazine* "rave review" of Askew as an even greater "New South" liberal than Gov. Jimmy Carter of Georgia.

Several years later, just prior to the 1976 nominating conventions, leading CFR personages such as David Rockefeller are known to have debated whether to install Reuben Askew as the Democratic Party's populist-sounding "anti-Eastern establishment" figurehead rather than Carter. As it was, Askew gave the keynote speech at the 1976 party convention, an unprecedented honor for a state governor.

#### The Florida record

Under Governor Askew, from 1971 on Florida was

turned into the major transshipment point for Caribbean and Latin American traffic in cocaine, heroin and marijuana into the United States. This route became particularly crucial to Dope, Inc. networks following the success of anti-narcotics campaigns by the Echeverria and Lopez Portillo governments in Mexico. At the same time, liberal Governor Askew opened up his state to bank and real estate takeovers by Canadian and organized crime-linked elements, whose speculations were principally financed by laundered drug monies. Under Askew's tolerant policies, Miami became the drug capital of the American South while gambling centered on rigged jai-alai matches became the state's leading sport.

To foster the flow of illegal drugs into Florida, in 1971 Askew rammed through the state legislature a bill reducing first-offense marijuana possession from a felony to a misdemeanor. This was one of the nation's earliest moves toward a policy of narcotics decriminalization.

For these and related efforts Askew quickly won the praise of the U.S. liberal establishment, exemplified by the *New York Times* and columnist Mary McGrory. He was touted as the South's "Mr. Clean"—the poor boy turned lawyer who emerged unsullied from service in a notoriously corrupt state legislature, a man who neither swore nor smoked, a man of principle, a reformer. No mention was made of "Mr. Clean"'s legislative softness on such unclean matters as gambling, real-estate speculation, and narcotics.

#### Friends and sponsors

Askew became the darling of the Zionist Lobby. A Presbyterian himself—since 1960 he has been an elder of the church—Askew received the John F. Kennedy Profiles in Courage Award from the B'nai B'rith in 1971; the John F. Kennedy Award of the National Council of Jewish Women and the Herbert Lehman Ethics Award, both in 1973; and the Leonard L. Abess Human Relations Award of the Florida Anti-Defamation League/B'nai B'rith in 1974.

Governor Askew also became a darling of the environmentalist movement. In 1972, he decreed the state legislature to be in "environmental session." One of the offshoots of his labors was the creation of a state environmental agency—one of the first in the nation—and the enactment of a \$240 million environmental bond issue. In gratitude, that year the Florida Audubon Society gave him its Outstanding Conservationist of the Year Award and he received a similar honor from the National Wildlife Federation. Both organizations are notorious for their Malthusian orientation.

Not unlike his liberal counterpart in California, Jerry Brown, Reuben Askew has a cult orientation. He is a member of the Isis-worshipping Scottish Rite of Freemasonry. For nutrition, he has a penchant for

brewer's yeast.

Like the man he replaces as Special Trade Negotiator, Askew is a leading figure in the national Democratic Party. During 1973-74, Askew was vice-chairman of the Southern Governors' Conference and its chairman in 1974-75. In 1976-77 he chaired the National Democratic Governors' Conference, and in 1977 he was chairman of the National Governors' Conference.

Since these connections derive from the period when Robert Strauss himself was running the national Democratic Party, it is probable that Strauss personally handpicked Askew as his successor in the trade post. The choice would have been agreeable to the stagemanagers of the recent Cabinet/White House shakeup, inasmuch as the shakeup was significantly intended to provide a non-"Eastern establishment" cover for the acceleration of CFR policies. Hence most of the recent appointees or re-assignees, including the three in trade and commerce—Askew, Luther Hodges, Jr., and Alonzo McDonald—are all Southern. Far from being genuine pro-growth non-"Eastern establishment" spokesmen, they all derive from traditionally anglophile

Southern Confederate networks, as does Strauss himself.

#### **Strauss moves on**

Strauss has no reason to be dissatisfied with his scheduled exclusive focus, starting this October, on Mideast affairs. First of all, Strauss has accomplished his chief assignment, railroading through Congress with a minimum of disclosure and discussion the anti-industrial Geneva Multinational Trade Negotiations (MTN), otherwise known as the Tokyo Round.

Equally compelling, Strauss will be able to devote full time to his Mideast task of dissolving the nascent Franco-German-Soviet-Arab entente for energy and industrial development, which is anathema to the London-Washington strategists Strauss serves.

Upcoming columns will discuss the scandal of Luther Hodges, Jr.'s appointment to the number-two Commerce Department post and the significance of Deputy Trade Negotiator Alonzo McDonald's transfer to the White House as its new staff director.

—Richard Schulman

## **GOLD**

### **What is Janeway worried about?**

Are Paris and Bonn vying with London and Washington for South Africa's political allegiance? Although Britain's extensive control of South African mining and finance would appear to place South Africa firmly in the Anglo-American camp, recent statements by New York economist Eliot Janeway to the Johannesburg-based weekly *Financial Mail* indicate that the situation is not quite so clear-cut.

Janeway, a Friedman-style monetarist who consults regularly with Lazard Freres partner Disque Deane, visited South Africa in July to confer with top government and private sector officials. In an interview appearing in the July 27 *Financial Mail*, Janeway went out of his way to emphasize that South Africa must ally itself with the U.S. rather than Western

gested that the U.S. government might guarantee South Africa a stable gold price in return for its continued loyalty.

"You don't consider our linkages with Western Europe to be more valuable to us [than linkages with the U.S.—A.R.]" queried the weekly.

"Western Europe will play you for an affiliate—a sucker—over gold," said Janeway. "Europe wants to own gold—in fact they are gold buyers by preference, but Western Europe is not going to put private money into South Africa over a 10 to 30 year stretch. I have discussed in the past, and will discuss while I am in South Africa, a scheme to provide a filter between the U.S. and South Africa—to give a stabilized gold price."

Janeway's comments raise a number of interesting questions. French President Giscard has proposed a "trialogue," or summit, in which continental European nations,

the Arab oil producers, and black African governments would discuss wide-ranging economic collaboration, including, for example, massive deployment of European technology and Arab capital into African development projects. Are the British worried that, despite its current pro-British foreign and domestic policies, South Africa could be lured into joining such a Euro-Arab-African economic cooperation zone? Significantly the West German Bundesbank and other central banks of European Monetary System members have been discreetly adding to their gold reserves in recent months, often employing the Dresdner Bank as their buying agent. Shortly before his assassination by Baader Meinhof terrorists in 1977, former Dresdner Bank Chairman Jürgen Ponto told the South African journal *To the Point International* that a new gold-backed monetary system was on the horizon and South Africa would play a key role in it, not only as a gold supplier, but as the center of an industrialization drive involving the entire African continent.

—Alice Roth