
Profile: Trent Lott

What does the senator from Mississippi have to Hyde?

by Mark Sonnenblick

After having pushed Majority Leader Robert Dole out of the Senate, Mississippi Republican Sen. Trent Lott is likely to grab control of the Senate on June 11. If the Republicans were to retain control of Congress after the November elections, the fate of the nation could well be, to a significant degree, in Lott's hands.

Lott is a tool of the British Crown's Mont Pelerin Society, which aims to destroy Constitutional government and to impose radical austerity, in the interest of international financial speculators. When a congressional aide in 1971, Lott was selected by Mont Pelerin member Rep. Phil Crane (R-Ill.) and current Heritage Foundation president and Mont Pelerin Society officer Edwin Feulner, to be one of a half-dozen free-market demagogues they would bring into Congress. His election was financed by the American Conservative Union's Larry Pratt, who considers himself the spiritual father of the radical militias. This crowd backed Lott at every step.

Were Clinton re-elected without taking back the Congress from Lott and Gingrich, he would likely be impeached, on the flimsiest of pretexts. Even a failed impeachment trial would discredit and cripple the Presidency—a prime objective of the British imperialists and their Confederates.

But Lott's unbounded lust for power might still be constrained. He has far more damaging skeletons hanging in his closet than anything the media has come up with against Bill or Hillary Clinton. Not only does he have an ugly segregationist past, but his corrupt business dealings have brought him close to a federal indictment.

Taking care of Mama

Only an accommodating U.S. Attorney and the senator's incredible ability to intimidate investigators, prevented Lott from being indicted on fraud and tax evasion charges such as those that landed his business associate, Isadore O. Hyde, in prison.

A grand jury found that during 1983, then-Congressman Lott successfully pressured NASA to grant a \$5 million contract to provide security guards for the Stennis Space Center at Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, to Hyde Security Services, Inc.

(HSSI). The contract had already been awarded to the low bidder, but Lott got NASA's Inspector General's Office to disqualify the two lowest bidders. The grand jury found: "Jerry Hlass, former director of NSTL [Space Center], admitted that he was under a lot of pressure from Lott. He would not be more specific. . . . David Anderson, NSTL Pricing Analyst, testified that: . . . NSTL Director Hlass was constantly under pressure from Lott's chief of staff, Tom Anderson." (Anderson is said to be Lott's choice for command of the Senate's staff.)

On April 4, 1984, Isadore O. Hyde created a full-time "public relations" job for Mrs. Iona Lott, Trent's 71-year-old mother, who was then receiving Social Security and working four hours per day, minimum wage, at a federally funded senior center job. She was kept on Hyde's payroll until Aug. 25, 1988. "Lott's services to HSSI were minimum and meaningless," and she only worked half the hours paid, the grand jury found. "Isadore Hyde leased a 1985 LTD for Lott's sole use. This car replaced Lott's 1956 Chevy . . . [and she] kept this vehicle for her personal use until November 1988."

Mrs. Lott told the grand jury that Hyde received \$966,000 in Small Business Administration loans from 1980 to 1985. SBA official Robert Funchess testified that he asked Hyde why Iona Lott was on his payroll. The answer, as recorded in an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) memo summarizing the grand jury findings: "Hyde said that she needed a job, that she could open doors that would not be opened otherwise, and that she was his connection to Washington as she could talk to Congressman Lott when he [Hyde] could not reach the Congressman."

Mrs. Lott told an IRS interviewer in 1989, according to his notes, "during [Lott's 1988 Senate] campaign, Mr. Hyde worked hard. . . . Hyde told [Mrs. Lott] that Hyde owed [Trent] because Lott helped him get an SBA loan." In public, she and her son remembered nothing.

NASA investigator John Batson discovered that Hyde "authorized the use of federal funds received under the NASA contract for the direct benefit of Congressman Lott's campaign activities." Batson also found, as reported by Bill Minor—the only Mississippi writer with the courage to report

embarrassing news about Lott—"Hyde, who became active in Republican politics, furnished then-Congressman Lott a building in Moss Point to use as his campaign headquarters in 1986 without any charge. And the building had been purchased by Hyde out of the Trans-Atlantic World Service account," a dummy company set up by Hyde. "Two checks totalling \$4,500 drawn on Hyde's Trans-Atlantic account were made as contributions to the Capital Foundation of the Mississippi Republican Party during those years."

Hyde and his wife were indicted by the grand jury on Dec. 18, 1991 on various federal income tax violations and conspiracy to defraud NASA. Only after a special assistant U.S. Attorney was sent from Washington in 1993, did they plead guilty and go to prison. Another grand jury was convened to look into the Hyde-Lott relationship, but the Hydys refused to talk.

By January 1988, NASA investigator John T. Batson had disclosed to the office of Jackson, Mississippi U.S. Attorney George L. Phillips, the facts about the Lott-Hyde relationship. Batson later told a journalist that he suspected that Phillips had delayed the case and kept it hushed up long enough for Lott to be elected senator in November 1988.

NASA Inspector General William Colvin also ran cover for Lott. "Whistleblower" Batson asserts, "In the Spring of 1992, during a site visit to Stennis Space Center, Mr. Colvin personally instructed me to close the HSSI investigation. . . . It became obvious to me that the decisions by Mr. Colvin to prevent my participation in interviews, to hinder the service of trial subpoenas, and his constant requests for information centering around the potential involvement of Senator Lott were more than idle curiosity or valid needs to know. It appeared very clear, that such behavior could, in substance, substantially damage the government's case at trial and successfully hinder or even obstruct related investigations."

Batson details how his superiors ordered him "not to contact or participate in a scheduled interview of Mrs. Iona Lott . . . ; to delete any reference . . . concerning payments to Senator Trent Lott's mother, the use of federal funds to pay campaign expenses on behalf of Lott, and political contributions made by Isadore O. Hyde out of federal contract funds, including NASA funds . . . ; not to cooperate in any manner with the FBI and Public Integrity Section."

Colvin ordered Batson transferred to California. Batson exposed Colvin's misdeeds; and Colvin was forced to resign from NASA, Sept. 3, 1994.

Lott has an amazing capacity to protect himself. The Hyde scandal was a well-kept secret, until Bill Minor and WLBT-TV reported on it in 1993. It became known nationally through Jack Anderson's syndicated columns of April 25 and May 5, 1994, "Sen. Lott and the NASA Contractor" and "Lott's Glass House Fronts on Whitewater." However, none of the biographies of Lott published this spring by the news sources Americans depend upon, gave even hints of any of the skeletons in his closet.

Does Lott wear sheets?

On the night of Sept. 29, 1962, Trent Lott was a cheerleader at the stadium where Mississippi Gov. Ross Barnett roused 46,000 people into a frenzy against the federal court-ordered integration of the University of Mississippi. The next day, as African-American student James Meredith sought to enroll, mobs overran the campus; two people were killed and hundreds wounded. Lott's reflections on this historic moment have never been recorded. His office has no autobiographical material. An *EIR* reporter asked a dozen Mississippi politicians, journalists, and political scientists, "What makes Trent Lott tick?" Each laughed and responded, "Nobody's ever asked that question before." And, as most knew, "Nobody's ever written a biography."

But, no one in the state doubts where Lott stands on racial integration. During 1981, he hounded the new Reagan administration with letters demanding that it return tax exempt status to segregated schools, after 38 such Mississippi schools had lost their tax exemptions. President Reagan wrote, "I think we should" on the margin of one such missive. Lott obtained a copy and circulated it to Treasury and Justice Department officials on Dec. 21. Two weeks later, the Reagan administration restored the tax exemptions. But then, under a storm of protest, an embarrassed Reagan backed off, asserting, "I am opposed with every fiber of my being to discrimination" and blamed Lott for "bad advice."

On May 23, 1982, Minor wrote: "Just when we begin to assume that the Citizens' Council, the old white segregationist group, is dead and buried in Mississippi, you find out you're wrong. The old CC lives and breathes, it turns out, in at least one place in Mississippi: in Carroll County, where the organization had a meeting the other night to talk about 'the good ole days' when it reigned supreme. And guess who came and was the speaker and honored guest—none other than Rep. Trent Lott." Minor's source was a state legislator who attended the pep rally at the CC's segregated private school.

Is Lott committed to segregation? Probably not. The evidence is that he is not committed to anything or anyone, except Trent Lott. When asked about his mission in life, Mississippi Lott-watchers agree: "power."

They also agree that Lott has been too busy gaining power to think about what to do with it when he got it. Mississippi political scientist Mary Coleman observed, "Lott never thought this opportunity would present itself. . . . He doesn't have the capacity to think." A Lott aide commented, "Over his career, Mr. Lott has been willing to do just about whatever people ask him to do if it is in his power."

But, on the big issues facing America, which "people" would tell him what to do? There is little doubt it would be the Mont Pelerin Society operatives who picked him up in 1971 and paid his way into Congress a year later. Everything he has done since has cohered with their concept of taking apart the U.S. government and giving it, piece by piece, to the most corrupt forces around.