



by JACK ANDERSON  
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## Washington Merry-Go-Round

WASHINGTON — The double standard in Washington is nowhere more apparent than in the attitude toward gifts.

The much-maligned Washington bureaucrat may not even permit himself to be taken to the cafeteria by anyone with a problem before his agency. But the wining and dining of Members of Congress by favor seekers is a major industry in Washington.

Most senators carefully reject any large charity and confine their contraband from private interests to football tickets, toiletries, liquor, cigars and the like. But Kentucky's silver-haired Senator Marlow Cook, if his memoirs should ever be put to music, could entitle them: "How to Succeed in the Senate Without Really Trying." For he has accepted, gratis, everything from automobiles to apartments.

Indeed, he arrived in the Senate nearly six years ago in a free Buick provided by a Louisville dealer named Jim Cooke. Sources with access to the records claim the generous dealer loaned Senator Cook a couple Buicks a year until early 1971. Thereafter, the Senator got his Buicks from an Arlington, Va., dealer named Larry Peacock. The Senator was loathe to discuss his transportation arrangements. He admitted only that he had borrowed a Buick "for a couple months" from Cook and had bought a Buick from Peacock.

As the senator from Kentucky, Cook felt he should have a voting address in the Blue Grass state. At first, he used the Buick dealer's home address. Then he set himself up, for about one dollar a month, in Louisville's plush penthouse atop the fashionable "800" apartment building. The apartment belonged to James E. Barnett, who was away promoting wrestling matches in Australia.

In return for the use of the apartment, the senator told us, he served as an overseer of the furniture and art in Barnett's apartment. He also paid the electric bills, telephone bills and maid service out of his own pocket, he said. Our sources, however, say Cook only paid for parking and maid service. Now Cook has moved into an apartment in his own name in the same building.

During the 1972 Republican convention, he wangled a rent-free apartment in Miami Beach. He insisted to us at first that he had rented rooms in the hotel where the Kentucky delegation was billeted. But when my associate

Jack Cloherty confronted him with the address of his Miami Beach digs, the senator acknowledged that he had stayed there "a couple nights."

During his first few years in the Senate, he also collected a \$200-to-\$300 monthly retainer from National Industries, a Louisville-based conglomerate. The regular payments finally ended with a grand, lump sum of \$2,500.

The senator explained he was paid by National Industries for "legal work," although he acknowledged that the money went into his personal bank account and not his law firm's account. The \$2,500 payment, he said, was an "honorarium."

He still does "spot work" for National Industries and accepts pay for it, he

added. But he insisted that his payments from the conglomerate don't influence his Senate conduct.

The senator also doesn't like to pay for his own plane travel if he can avoid it. He has taken frequent free flights in the corporate planes of Ashland Oil, Phillip-Morris Company and National Industries.

For Marlow Cook, the Senate's code of ethics hasn't deterred him from improving his lifestyle at the expense of others. The political compromises, so essential to lawmaking, tend to make personal compromises seem permissible. In the convivial and confidential atmosphere of the Senate, whose members are fond of calling it the world's most exclusive club, there are too few restraints.

Footnote: Cook told us he seldom makes more than \$10,000 a year from his law practice. After his election to the Senate, he was also named a director of the Bank of Louisville. The chairman, Sam Kline, happens to be the father-in-law of National Industries' head honcho, Stanley Yarmuth. Incidentally, Yarmuth's son John is on the public payroll as Cook's legislative aide.

Stanley Yarmuth did not return our calls. Jim Cook and Larry Peacock both refused to comment.

**WATCH ON WASTE:** Government bureaucrats are constantly looking for excuses to get away from Washington and visit faraway places at the taxpayers' expense.

Two Census Bureau technicians, for example, took off last month on a jaunt to Germany for an 11-day "International Symposium on Economics of Informatics," where they will exchange information on counting people.

The price tag for this trip is \$2,100, excluding the conference fees. Yet it could have been much more. Originally two of their superiors, Edward Failor and his aide Skip Watts, who are more skilled at Republican politicking than census taking, had planned to go along.

But after we questioned Failor's aide about the cost and purposes of the trip, both he and Failor canceled out. "We have decided not to accompany the two experts after all," they notified us.