



## Admiral Ripcord faces the grueling interrogation of Senator Friendly

**T**ESTIMONY OF ADM. OLLIE RIPCORD, CLANDESTINE commercial cutout, before the Senate-House Select Investigating Committee on Cupidity.

*Sen. Friendly:* Is it not true, Admiral, that you were an Honor Scout, graduated at the top of your Annapolis class, heroically served your country in 13 wars, taking part in 8,027 combat missions for democracy and against communism?

*Adm. Ripcord:* Yes, sir, because I love America.

*Sen. Friendly:* Is it not also the case that you have bravely and brilliantly advised our beloved president on a variety of issues from the threat posed by Islam in the Middle East to East Room decorations?

*Adm. Ripcord:* I regard it as an honor to serve my president with whatever modest abilities with which the All-American Almighty has endowed me.

*Rep. Hostile:* Admiral, can you tell us how \$450 million in proceeds from the sale of Arlington National Cemetery came into your possession?

*Adm. Ripcord:* Sir, I am awaiting the arrival of my business partner, Amir Sheik Down, to go over the paperwork on that particular enterprise.

*Rep. Hostile:* As I understand it, these monies were to be used to overthrow the vicious pacifist regime of New Zealand. How much of these monies were actually used for that worthy and inspiring purpose?

*Adm. Ripcord:* I would have to check with Sheik Down for the specifics, sir.

*Rep. Hostile:* Can you at least give us a ballpark on that?

*Adm. Ripcord:* Sir, I believe it is somewhere in the area of \$22.75. As I recall we

picked up a lunch tab for an Auckland operative.

*Sen. Friendly:* Before my worthy colleague badgers you further, let me ask if it is true that you have a lovely wife and three fine children?

*Adm. Ripcord:* Yes, sir, when I'm not serving my country in the gloomy vaults of the Union Banque Suisse, I love nothing better than spending Saturdays with my wonderful family browsing in the garden department at the K-Mart.

*Sen. Friendly:* As a patriot and savvy strategist, can you give us an idea of our country's vital stake in New Zealand?

*Adm. Ripcord:* Yes, sir. New Zealand commands the western sea approaches to Antarctica, where the Soviets maintain an aggressive penguin study station. If we allow the New Zealand regime to continue its present policies, we face the ultimate danger.

*Sen. Friendly:* And that is, Admiral?

*Adm. Ripcord:* A pacific Pacific.

*Rep. Hostile:* Admiral, what can you tell us about the Torquemada Corp.?

*Adm. Ripcord:* I believe it's a small Salvadoran company in which Sheik Down has an interest. If I recall correctly I might own somewhere in the area of 90 percent of the stock. Nothing, really.

*Rep. Hostile:* What is the business of the Torquemada Corp.?

*Adm. Ripcord:* As I understand it, they manufacture items for sportsmen and hobbyists. Garrottes, thumbscrews, things like that.

*Sen. Friendly:* As a member of the Small Business Committee, I'd like to commend you, Admiral, for your initiative. I know the El Salvadoran police think very highly of your

company and its contribution to the local economy. I understand you hire a lot of the handicapped.

*Adm. Ripcord:* There's usually some perfectly understandable confusion on that score, Senator. We don't hire them so much as generate them.

*Rep. Hostile:* Admiral, can you tell us about your role in Rambo Land Realty?

*Adm. Ripcord:* Yes, sir. I believe it's a company that is seeking to develop a combination hazardous waste landfill and patriotic theme park on the site of the former Arlington National Cemetery. I think Mr. Sheik Down has some interest in it.

*Rep. Hostile:* Don't you also have an interest?

*Adm. Ripcord:* I would have to check my records. But as a pure guesstimate, I would reckon that I own, say, 97 percent of the stock.

*Rep. Hostile:* With all due respect, Admiral, don't you sometimes think that your involvement in the sale of Arlington National Cemetery and the diversion of funds from that deal to Torquemada and Rambo Land Realty might be construed in some quarters as inappropriate in light of the desperate need of the New Zealand freedom fighters for ballot-stuffing devices?

*Adm. Ripcord:* Those of us in the frontline of free enterprise do the very best we can, given the ingratitude shown us by the wimps and parlor pinks who would have us observe Embassy Row etiquette in the unforgiving jungle out there beyond the Beltway.

*Sen. Friendly:* Admiral, is it not true that the Arlington National Cemetery was full of dead people and old pieces of stone? And is it not also true that Congress had long con-

templated a more economically efficient use of that parcel?

*Adm. Ripcord:* Affirmative, Senator.

*Rep. Hostile:* Admiral, weren't you aware that the Bye Land Amendment specifically banned the sale of national cemeteries for the purpose of subverting South Pacific governments?

*Adm. Ripcord:* I'm a carrier pilot and investor, not a constitutional lawyer, sir.

*Sen. Friendly:* Admiral, I understand you have a mother who resembles Helen Hayes?

*Adm. Ripcord:* I believe deeply in motherhood, Senator.

*Sen. Friendly:* Could you tell us about the strategic significance of the land formerly occupied by the Arlington National Cemetery?

*Adm. Ripcord:* Sir, it commands the approaches to the upper Potomac and would be vital in any defense of the malls of Chevy Chase and Bethesda. A patriotic theme park will serve to protect it from simulated Soviet assault.

*Rep. Hostile:* What did the president know about this diversion of funds?

*Adm. Ripcord:* Sir, I'm not at liberty to divulge that information.

*Rep. Hostile:* Admiral, may I remind you that a contempt conviction in the District of Columbia is cause for automatic revocation of your realtor's license.

*Adm. Ripcord:* When I briefed the president on this enterprise, all he said was that I should make sure to invite Rhonda Fleming to the grand opening.

*Sen. Friendly:* Our thanks, Admiral. This nation stands in debt to you.

**Peter Karman** is a frequent contributor to *In These Times*.