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The Neal Asbury Show
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Former Ambassador Charles Ford contends that trade is more than business – it creates jobs and economic prosperity



This week's nationally syndicated The Neal Asbury Show on WZAB-AM featured Charles A. Ford, former Ambassador to Honduras and Business Engagement Advisor to the Commander at United States Southern Command. In his role as Business Advisor, Ambassador Ford was a champion for broadening the use of military options to incorporate economic reforms that promoted economic prosperity for the U.S. and its trading partners around the world.

"The U.S. really should be involved in commercial diplomacy with other nations, engaging them to help promote education, economic reforms and even issues such as the environment and corruption. Within countries where the combatant command interacts with the

government and populace, we need to identify other linkages that create economic partnerships," said Ambassador Ford who was the first advisor at a Combatant Command and who promoted coordination with other U.S. Government agencies to explore the role of the private sector in the 21st century defense of the U.S. and its partners.

Ambassador Ford points to Colombia as a country where the U.S. helped the government reclaim sovereignty from drug traffickers by promoting economic programs that engaged the private sector and gave Colombia a larger presence in world commerce.

Like many past The Neal Asbury Show guests Ambassador Ford is concerned that trade agreements are still unpopular with many parts of the U.S. who equate trade agreements with job losses.

"I think that Americans need to recognize that jobs are created at home when we open up markets. Jobs are not lost due to exporting; they are lost because many communities are averse to addressing the real problems that involve rethinking a community's approach to its economic viability. It has to start with frank discussions about re-training and education. A community needs to take steps to be competitive internationally and domesti-

cally," proposed Ambassador Ford. He blames part of the problem on a blurred vision of the world of trade, starting with the need for rules of law that must prevail with any trading partner. Some of the trade agreements signed by the U.S. were flawed because they did not gear up for trade in a broader context that involves a societal approach, not just about business. This miscalculation has led to corruption within the governments of some trading countries that has really negatively impacted U.S. companies and caused mistrust.

"Trade creates jobs. The dollar decline gives us renewed export growth potential. Moving to a protectionist mentality only harms U.S. job creation," concluded Ambassador Ford.

Joining the show was James J Laski, today a popular radio host on WGN radio in Chicago, but at one time rose through the ranks of the Chicago political "machine" to become Chicago City Clerk. It was in this capacity that Laski was indicted for accepting \$48,000 in



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payoffs while managing Chicago's scandal-plagued Hired Truck Program. He served prison time as a result of his activities.

"Even while Barack Obama was coveting connections with Chicago politicians while a State Senator, you could find him playing cards with Ward bosses. Even back then he was known as a bad bluffer, and his approach to Afghanistan is another example of a bad bluff. Giving a timetable for withdrawal is the ultimate bluff, because it just means our enemies will wait in their caves to attack again once the U.S. leaves," said Laski.

Laski contends that President Obama's approach to governing is based on Chicago Mayor Richard Daley's "play book," which explains why Obama has surrounded himself with advisers who got their training in Chicago. The standard operating procedure is "not about arm twisting, it's about arm breaking" to achieve their political goals. That is why many politicians on Capital Hill are being alienated by such tactics, according to Laski.

Laski also notes that the political success enjoyed by top Obama advisers such as Rahm Emanuel and David Axelrod owe their success to Mayor Daley. This means that Obama's election has only strengthened Daley's power and prestige, and which explains why the Daleys were among the first supporters to

gain a sleepover at the White House.

"If you look at Chicago's bid for the Olympics, it's typical Chicago arrogance, which is why Chicago lost the bid. There was sense of entitlement that really turned off Olympic organizers," said Laski.

Laski characterized Daley as a politician with a "thin skin who is paranoid about people and doesn't trust anyone who isn't in his inner circle." It is a trait shared by Obama, according to Laski, who only listens to his close Chicago-trained advisers.

The Neal Asbury Show tackles free trade and enterprise issues every Friday from 5:00 PM until 6:00 PM on WZAB-AM 880 and is co-hosted by Richard Roffman, a veteran 30-year publisher with extensive domestic and international experience. The show is streamed live on line at WWW.880THEBIZ.COM, which is affiliated with Bloomberg Radio and CNBC, and can be heard nationally on 920-WGKA (Atlanta); KSEV (Houston); 1500 AM (Washington D.C.); 1220-KDOW (San Francisco); and 1300-KKOL (Seattle).



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