

Tidbits and Outrages

They Done Wright Wrong

In April 1973 we published an article by Marjorie Boyd, "Why Congress Didn't Investigate Watergate *Before* the Election." Richard Dudman of *The St. Louis Post-Dispatch* now adds to that story:

... before the scandal began to unfold, Mr. Ford, as House Republican leader, played a part in suppressing the facts until after President Nixon had won his landslide reelection victory.... That earlier incident involved a [1972] investigation by Wright Patman, chairman of the House Banking and Currency Committee.... President Nixon's concern about the Patman inquiry became known in the course of the House impeachment inquiry when Nixon reluctantly made public edited transcripts of certain White House tapes last April 29.

The Sept. 15, 1972, tape showed that Dean was briefing Nixon on the various problems he faced.... Dean brought up the Patman investigation. He said he wasn't sure he could "turn that off."

Dean suggested that Stans be directed to go to Ford and explain to him the problems that the Patman inquiry would create. "We just don't want Stans up there in front of the cameras with Patman, and Patman asking all these questions," Dean said. "It's going to be the whole thing, the press going over and over and over again."

Nixon picked up the idea and said, "Jerry has really got to lead on this." He settled on White House aide John D. Ehrlichman as the person who should talk to Mr. Ford and said Ehrlichman should tell Mr. Ford, "Now, God damn it, get the hell over with this."

Nixon said Mr. Ford could talk to the ranking Republican on the committee, William B. Widnall of New Jersey—"just brace him" and tell him Nixon thought it was time for him to "start behaving." Nixon said he could not talk to Mr. Ford himself but "He's got to know that it comes from the top... he's got to get at this and screw this thing up while he can, right?"

Mr. Ford was asked about the episode last November at a Senate hearing on his confirmation as Vice President. Senate Democratic whip Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia asked him to relate "your role, if any, in the blocking of an investigation by the House Banking and Currency Committee into the Watergate break-in."

Ford acknowledged that he called two meetings of the Republican members of the committee at which the Patman inquiry was discussed. The real issue, he said was that Patman "was going about the matter in the wrong way." Ford said he called the meetings after several members had asked him to do so....

Senator Byrd asked: "But as I understand you, any efforts that you may have contributed toward the stifling or impeding or blocking of such investigation would be harmful to the President, harmful to his chances of reelection, or harmful to your party." Mr. Ford replied: "The answer is no, Senator Byrd."

Byrd asked Mr. Ford whether he had been in contact with anyone at the White House indicating that the White House wanted him to lend his efforts as a congressional leader to blocking the investigation. Mr. Ford denied "categorically" that he had had any such conversations with Haldeman, Ehrlichman or Dean and said he did not recall that the matter had come up in his frequent conversations with William E. Timmons, the President's liaison officer with Congress.

The upshot of Mr. Ford's testimony was that he acknowledged, in effect, that he helped block the inquiry but that he interpreted his action as a proper move in the interest of correct procedures and not as any part of the White House coverup.

Patman's list of proposed witnesses that he wanted to subpoena contained names that later became familiar in the televised Senate Watergate hearings, when the scandal was exposed in full: Sally Harmony, Frederick LaRue, Jeb Stuart Magruder, Robert C. Mardian, John N. Mitchell, Robert Odle, Herbert L. Porter, Hugh W. Sloan, Stans and many others.

Dean testified that "if those hearings had been held, there is a good chance these hearings would not be held today, because I think that would have unraveled the coverup."

Quotas on Life

David Burnham of *The New York Times* continues his excellent series of articles on our government's safety agencies with this report:

The government official in charge of a federal program to protect the lives and safety of workers in southeastern Ohio has been accused of setting a quota limiting the number of violations his inspectors could impose on delinquent companies.

The accusation against Peter M. Schmitt, director of Columbus area for the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, became known as the agency's Washington headquarters prepared a reply to a Senate staff committee report charging that the agency nationally "has been shackled by administrative ineptness."

The allegation that Mr. Schmitt set a negative quota for some inspectors at a meeting on April 8 was made by Joe Velaquez, a special assistant in the Ohio State Department of Industrial Relations. It was supported by a note written about the quota by Mike Ypsilantis, one of the four inspectors who attended the session.

According to the note, Mr. Schmitt said that if an employer had ten workers the inspector could cite five violations each visit, if there were 20 workers there could be ten violations, 30 workers up to 15 violations, 100 workers from 15 to 20 violations, 1,000 workers from 25 to 40 violations, and 10,000 workers between 40 and 60 violations.

Taking Stock

The GAO has disclosed that 19 Federal Power Commission officials own stock in companies affected by FPC regulations. Seven of the officials were administrative law judges who write major regulatory decisions for the FPC.

The Ad Game

Opinion magazines have a difficult time attracting advertising. We, for example, were somewhat depressed recently when Little, Brown canceled a full-page ad for *Kissinger* by Marvin and Bernard Kalb after we ran an unfavorable review of the book. But every cloud has its silver lining. If we lost Little, Brown, *The National Review's* steadfast rationality has attracted South African Airways.

Money Talks

There is a move underway in the Senate to limit members to \$15,000 per year in speaking fees. Why the measure is needed is explained by Jerry Landauer of *The Wall Street Journal*:

Senate Majority leader Mike Mansfield has been acting lately like a nervous football coach before a big game. Over and over these days, he is ordering roll-call votes on trivial matters, just to keep his charges from roaming.

"The leadership has been forced to use these bed-check votes, so called, to get the members here in sufficient numbers to comprise a quorum," Sen. Mansfield recently explained, after 35 of the 100 Senators from both sides of the aisle had failed to show up for voting on amendments to a controversial bill. . . .

Such a dismal turnout isn't just an election season phenomenon. The number of missing members sometimes exceeds one-third, even when Senators aren't running for reelection or for the White House. . . .

During a round of voting on emergency energy legislation last year the number of absent Senators reached 44. The same number failed to vote on the Foreign Relations Authorization Act of 1972. On

occasion the Senate enacts legislation with more members absent than voting "aye." Once it sent President Nixon a disputed appropriations bill by a vote of 27 to 25; 48 Senators didn't vote.

All this absenteeism has many causes. But one of the biggest, and perhaps least recognized, is the senatorial thirst for speaking fees. Almost any day of the week, whether the Senate is in session or not, somewhere in the country one or more Senators probably is speaking for a profit—to businessmen, labor leaders, students, trade associations, church-goers, or anybody else who will pay the price. Depending on the Senator's popularity or the importance of his committee assignment, that fee ranges generally from \$500 to \$2,500.

In 1973, the Senate's collective income from "honorariums" topped \$1 million for the first time. That was nearly three times more than the 1969 total, and it was 75 per cent higher than the preceding year. Thirty-seven Senators earned more than \$10,000 apiece in speaking fees, 18 pulled in more than \$20,000 apiece and three (led by Democrat Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota with \$65,650) grossed more in honorariums than from their \$42,500 government salaries. Only four Senators gave all their speaking income to charity.

WHY JOHNNY CAN'T WORK:

The Snobbery Factor

by Suzannah Lessard

Equality of Educational Opportunity, otherwise known as "The Coleman Report," certified its author, James S. Coleman, as "a good man" in the world of education. I was first introduced to the recently issued Second Coleman Report (officially *Youth: Transition to Adulthood**) by Jerome Karabel, a sociologist and teaching fellow at Harvard, in *The New York Times Book Review*. Judging from Karabel's review, Coleman has gravely endangered his certification. The thrust of this new document, the reviewer reports, is that the long-term incarceration of young people in educational institutions has created a youth culture which hinders adjustment to adult society and nurtures an irresponsible, immature mentality. According to Karabel, the Coleman panel's prescription for this problem is to get students out into the working world where they would experience the discipline imposed by production goals, learn self-management, and develop a sense

of responsibility in contrast to the present situation in which (here he quotes from Coleman), "excluded from the central institutions of our society," students develop an image of themselves as "outsiders" with no "stake in the existing system."

"How much," wrote Karabel, "would youth learn about self-management in the often bureaucratic contexts of American work places? It seems clear that what the Coleman panel really means by self-management is management of one's self for the purpose of *adjusting* to existing institutions." He goes on, "Despite well-intentioned talk of extending school-work alternation schemes to college preparatory students, the real consequence of more career education would be the development of a dual tracking system which would accentuate inequality in the schools... [producing] technically proficient but culturally impoverished automatons,

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**Youth: Transition to Adulthood*. Report of the President's Science Advisory Committee, James S. Coleman, chairman, et al. Chicago University Press, \$8.50, \$1.95.