

The Insider

Health food highs/Carter courts the court . . . sort of

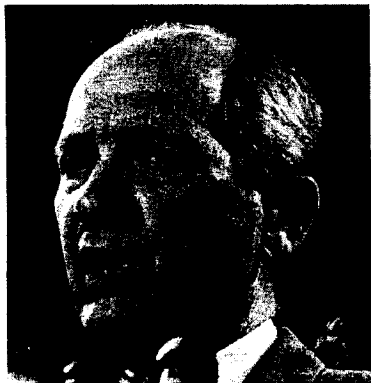
Politics

Guess who's coming to dinner

It wasn't quite a blue jean affair but . . . Some weeks back, in an apparent attempt to get to know the other co-equal branches of government, President Carter invited the whole Supreme Court, and their wives, to dinner at the White House—informal. The justices showed up promptly at 6:30, were served dinner at 7, with the Carters at one table and the Mondales at another. Mid-dinner, the Carters and Mondales switched. Then, at 8:30, just when his guests were settling back, Carter took Rosalynn's hand, went to the door, and said that it had been lovely having them all, but he and his wife had to go downstairs to the movie room. "Perhaps you'll be interested in what we're going to do," he offered. "We're having the president of Mexico here for a state dinner in a few days, and Rosalynn and I have never been to a state dinner, so we're going to look at movies of past state dinners to see how it's done."

Artful dodgers

Academics are always willing to air their opinions—or, almost always. It seems that the House Government Operations Committee is having some trouble finding constitutional scholars to testify against a provision in Carter's reorganization bill, which calls for presidential plans to go into effect unless either the Senate or the House vetoes them. Chairman Jack Brooks



Brooks: Who'll bear witness?

prefers a requirement for positive approval by both houses and regards Carter's suggested procedure as unconstitutional. So, say committee staff members, do potential witnesses. The rub: a general reluctance by these scholars to offend an administration which just might offer them prestigious positions. Stanford professor Gerald Gunther, for example, begged off, saying, "I haven't really decided to go public on this yet."

In fact, the only major scholar to agree to go public for the committee so far is Harvard constitutional expert Laurence Tribe, who has reason to be sensitive about executive excesses: his home and office phones were tapped and he was visited by the FBI after opposing several of Nixon's Supreme Court nominees.

Gamesmanship

In his new book, *The Gamesman*, psychoanalyst Michael Maccoby praises Sidney Harman as an enlightened capitalist for experimenting with worker control in his Tennessee factory.

Apparently Harman, who has been appointed undersecretary of commerce, thinks just as highly of Maccoby's abilities. Last month, interviewing for the job of assistant secretary for congressional liaison, he assembled the six candidates in a room with a tape recorder running on the table. Only after a while did one of the aspirants recognize supershrink Maccoby sitting in the corner. Now, Maccoby regularly records the sessions, evaluates the candidates' personalities and advises on the final choice.

In this case, winning or losing will all depend on how you play the game.

Mum's the word

Some things never seem to change with administrations. News reports of CIA payoffs to foreign leaders have sparked official anger toward the press and raised the specter of renewed attempts to control the flow of sensitive information. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance reportedly believes that the *Washington Post* picked the morning of his arrival in Jordan to headline King Hussein's involvement because the timing would get the maximum attention. American officials privately attack the *Post* for jeopardizing



Vance and Hussein: Ya pays your money and ya takes your chances

Vance's Mideast peace effort, although Hussein himself never mentioned the matter during the talks. As a result of the disclosures, not only will the administration attempt to restrict the number of congressional committees with access to intelligence information, but the White House may revive proposals of the Ford and Nixon Administrations to apply criminal sanctions against leaks of government secrets.

Out of the desert

At the highest level, administration officials are reviewing a range of pressures to make Israel more amenable to a Mideast settlement. They will try the carrot first—increased foreign aid. If that fails, the stick of aid cutbacks may be applied. The recent cancellation of Ford's promise of concussion bombs was made not only on merits, but served as a warning. Carter, it is said, is convinced that Mideast peace is urgently necessary and, to achieve it, Israel will have to withdraw virtually all the way back to the pre-1967 borders.

Seventies

Killing the committee

When the House of Representatives voted on February 2 to give two more months of life to its beleaguered select committee investigating the assassinations of

President Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr., many felt that the House was merely searching for an easy way to ease the committee out of existence. House Speaker Tip O'Neill went so far as to tell a Washington television audience on February 25 that, unless the committee produced proof of conspiracy by March 31, "the committee isn't going to be continued." Under the circumstances, this pronouncement by O'Neill was tantamount to a death sentence.

What began with the unilateral firing of chief counsel Richard A. Sprague by chairman Henry B. Gonzalez (a move blocked by the other 11 committee members) has grown into a running feud between the chairman and his committee, in which the Sprague matter has almost become a side issue. The eccentric Gonzalez, in defiance of the rest of the committee, has crippled the investigative capability of the staff, shutting off their access to FBI, CIA and Secret Service files and to long-distance telephone lines. At the last committee meeting, Gonzalez publicly accused committee member

Richardson Preyer (Dem.—N.C.), one of the most respected members of the House, of conspiring to take over the chairmanship. The committee adjourned over Gonzalez' objection and filed out of the chamber, leaving Gonzalez to rail against Sprague and the committee to an astonished press corps.

Finally, on March 2, Gonzalez offered his resignation as chairman, but O'Neill for the time being declined to submit the resignation to the House for approval.

Congress is acutely aware that it will be accused of covering up if the current probe is shut down. And it most certainly will inspire a backlash on the part of the Black Caucus, which was promised a reopening of the King case by the House leadership.

One conceivable face-saving scenario on the Kennedy case might be for the House to turn the entire matter over to the Senate Intelligence Committee which, *New Times* has confirmed, has quietly resurrected its investigation of the Kennedy assassination under the direction of Senator Gary Hart (Dem.—Colo.).

Such a move would hardly warm the hearts of critics, since the limited investigation conducted by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence under Hart and Senator Richard Schweiker (Rep.—Penn.) last year failed to review the key finding of the Warren Commission: that Lee Harvey Oswald had indeed killed the president. No physical evidence was examined.

The Schweiker-Hart report was extremely critical of the FBI's investigation of the assassination and found that relevant evidence dealing with CIA plots against Castro never found its way to the Warren Commission. But the Senate report leaned heavily toward an alleged Castro connection to Oswald while ignoring or glossing over evidence of Oswald links to American intelligence agencies. Evidence pointing toward involvement in the assassination by Cuban exiles, organized crime or other domestic groups was similarly given short shrift.

Critics also pointed out that to speculate about the possible forces behind the assassination without attempting to resolve the question of Oswald's guilt represented a clear case of putting the carriage before the horse.

The fact that Hart is directing the new Senate probe does not instill confidence that the new investigation will be any more thorough than the last. Despite the fact that the Senate committee's findings obviously spread a dark shadow over the entire Warren Commission investigation, Hart was widely quoted as being satisfied that Oswald had acted alone. He contended that the question still to be resolved was not whether he did it but rather why he did it.

With one congressional committee seemingly dead, barring a miracle, and with another of dubious intent gearing up, it seems more and more likely that the answers in the King and Kennedy cases will be a long time coming.

—Jerry Policoff

Fly me to the moon

Neil Armstrong's trip to the moon was as much a fantasy as Jules Verne's. So says Bill Kaysing, formerly a technical writer for the Apollo project and author of an 87-page booklet that debunks the Giant Step for Mankind as myth: our astronauts, Kaysing claims, never did walk on the moon, they simply bounced around on a bit of sand in a nuclear testing site, an hour's drive from Las Vegas. And those incredible lunar panoramas were nothing more than Stanley Kubrick backdrops; the spine-tingling module splashdown, airdrops from a large plane

