

# Clamping the Lid on Embarrassment

By Jack Anderson

Ever since we reported on the drunken antics of an Agency for International Development official during Vice President Spiro T. Agnew's recent visit to Kenya, AID has been tightening the lid on classified messages.

FBI agents are grilling officials and giving lie detector tests to find out who leaked the secret report. Copy machines have been moved to secured areas where they are constantly monitored.

All these precautions have been taken in the name of national security. Yet our story, which precipitated the manhunt, had nothing to do with security.

We quoted from a message that Robinson McIlvane, the American ambassador to Kenya, sent to Dr. John Hannah, the AID administrator. The message was so sensitive that it was hand-delivered to Hannah under seal. He was upset, therefore, when we printed it for 45 million Americans to read.

But the subject of the message was the hijinks of Bert Tollefson, who is in charge of the AID program in Kenya. Alleged the hush-hush message:

"The problem started with Bert's well-known pushiness and general lack of sensitivity and culminated in his getting sloshed at Treetops (a night club), making passes at the

vice president's secretary and trying to drag her down the steps to meet an elephant at ground level."

Tollefson assured us by telephone from Nairobi that it was all a misunderstanding, and blamed the whole episode on unidentified Democratic holdovers.

But Hannah took urgent steps to make sure we don't get any more of his secret messages. He issued terse instructions, intended for the eyes only of those who handle sensitive documents.

As evidence that Hannah hasn't yet plugged the leak, here are his new instructions:

"The reproduction of the State's NODIS, EXDIS, and TOP SECRET and the AID's EYES ONLY and TOP SECRET messages requires the approval of the AID Executive secretary, and such reproduction can be accomplished only by the EXSEC Staff. . . .

"All reproduction and copy machines are being located in secured areas, which will be monitored. . . . During non-working hours, all copy machines will be secured in such a way that they are inoperable."

## Slow Economic Rise

Reporting to Republican congressional leaders on the economic outlook the other day, Budget Director George Shultz confided between puffs on his pipe that the economy is "moving in the

right direction but not fast enough."

He reminded them that two million men had been released from the armed forces and laid off from defense production. This has had "a heavy impact" upon the economy, he said, but it is "now largely behind us."

He insisted that "inflation has topped out" and that the "economic structure clearly is strengthening."

The GOP leaders questioned President Nixon at the secret session about his economic plans. Asked about the 10 per cent surcharge on foreign imports, he replied: "Foreign nations are curious as to how long it will last. We are not going to move too quickly."

"It's important," cautioned New York's Sen. Jacob Javits, the top Republican on the Joint Congressional Economic Committee, "that we indicate our readiness to negotiate."

Colorado's Sen. Gordon Allott, the Senate Republican Conference chairman, questioned the President about tax investment credits for businessmen.

"Is the investment credit to be recommended on a temporary or permanent basis?" he asked.

"There should be an ongoing program," said Mr. Nixon. "We'll address ourselves to it in January."

The President, sipping coffee but frowning sternly as he spoke added: "Other countries

have used the device of taxes to accelerate depreciation to permit their industries to compete better overseas. We will have to examine our whole plant and investment situation to improve its competitive position."

Footnote: the President mildly goaded Wisconsin's Rep. John Byrne, the ranking Republican on the powerful House Ways and Means Committee, about his "disagreement" with White House tax proposals. This was a teasing reference to Byrne's close cooperation with Chairman Wilbur Mills (D-Ark.). But Byrne predicted that the "outline" of Nixon's proposals would be left intact by the Ways and Means Committee.

## Tight Squeeze

A Highway Safety official has proposed approving bus emergency exit windows that are so small an overfed American can't squeeze through.

On Aug. 2, the agency's motor vehicle section proposed a 13-by-20-inch size, far smaller than windows on modern buses. So shocked was the agency's research chief, John Edwards, that he fired off a memo pointing out that the school bus lobby recommended a minimum of 17-by-24 inches even for children.

The mini-exit Edwards wrote, "does not appear to be based on real life conditions encountered at the time of bus crashes."