

# New Air Permeates Investigations

By Richard Harwood  
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"Mr. Schwartz, did you ever know Gregory Slobertaster?"  
—Senate Internal Security Subcommittee

At times, this week, Washington seemed haunted by the bad old days.

In Foggy Bottom, there was embarrassed bureaucratic talk about "security procedures" directed at non-forming college professors.

In the baroque theater of the Senate Caucus Room, there were whispers of McCarthyism as a stolid investigator calmly explained the necessity for inquiring into the sex life of a healthy but unmarried young man.

And from the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee yesterday came still another volume on "State Department Security" that

was a long-slumbering Washington memory.

It records the state interrogations of Abba P. Schwartz, departed Administrator of the Department of Security and Consular Affairs.

"Mr. Slobertaster, Mr. Schwartz, can you tell us what chapter of the American Veterans Committee you belong to?"

"Mr. Schwartz: I would assume it is the local chapter."

Senator Dodd: "Don't you know what chapter?"

When did you join? You don't remember who asked you or invited you to join? How long were you a member? I think you are willfully evasive and I want the report to show that you're right ahead, Mr. Slobertaster."

To civil libertarians, the parallels with the past were striking. The differences

were even more striking, however.

There was more of springtime than fear in the air. And more significantly, it was the investigators rather than the investigated who were defensive.

Attorney General Nicholas de B. Katzenbach denounced the "intolerable" business of wiretapping under present laws, Secretary of State Dean Rusk was opening a can of worms in his Department of material from the raw files of the FBI.

The president of General Motors made an extraordinary public apology for his company's investigation into the beliefs and personal

habits of automobile critic Ralph Nader. Sen. Edward Long (D-Mo.) denounced pharmaceutical companies for engaging in "distasteful" industrial espionage. The J. P. Stevens Co. was rebuked by the National Labor Relations Board for spying on pro-union employees.

At week's end it was plain that both the government and institutions in private society were developing a new concern with the citizen's right to be let alone.

As Rusk put it at his news conference Friday, "the rights and privileges of American citizens" cannot be ignored in the name of national security. That doctrine was much in

favor in Congress last week, too. It underlay the Judiciary Subcommittee investigation of the Nader case and the Long investigation of "snooping" and industrial espionage.

There was little evidence, in short, that the old days of suspicion and character assassination were to be received in Washington this spring or that the State Department was entering a new period of repression.