

WxPost coverage/non-coverage CIA domestic-intelligence story HW a.m. 12/27/74

Assuming that the Post has given many of its staff time off during the Xmas period, as the absence of by-lines would seem to indicate, there still is no account for its non-reporting ~~and~~ and incuriosity about this major story that, absent more Watergating, can lead to a scandal not often equalled in magnitude. Given the Post's competitive relationship with the NYTimes and the Post's pretense of liberalism and dedication to civil liberty, what amounts to close to total journalistic abdication is not easy to explain.

Were vacations a factor, the Post still has its many wire services. It has not used their stories. AP's copy, as it appeared in the Baltimore Sun 12/23-6, has much the Post does not carry. (I've seen no UPI but I have heard radio and TV news.)

If any papers want a real scandal, the indications of an official cover-up are unhidden in the semantics with which all the non-denials presented as denials ("categorical" AP called "elms") are phrased. There has been not a single one that is not openly hedged. Post recognition of this is apparent in Murray Marder's long story of several days ago, although it is buried far down in the jump.

Without the complications I have seen in its life, the Post, ordinarily, would have put a crew to work on this and with little difficulty would by now have had a series of exposés.

There were several days when the edition we got had no stories at all.

Ron Kessler's by-liner in today's was next to the obits. It is but 8 grafs long, featuring Clark Clifford's call for a Watergate-type committee.

While this is a down-play, that Kessler is on it may have significances. They like by-lines, so he may have done a simple story because other by-liners are away.

However, he is supposed to have been on an RFK story and apparently remained in LA after his long story appeared. His doing a CIA story need not indicate he is finished with RFK. He can have written another story the Post is holding for a better time, especially if it intends syndication. Bad time, too much news competition for the bad time now.

Because Kessler is an investigative reporter for the Post and because its main CIA expert, Larry Stern, is on a sabbatical, perhaps he will be on the story. There is no doubt that however it is covered and/or regarded by the Post, this is going to be a lasting story.

When even the Times (which I've not seen but been told about) is now treating the story gingerly, the Post's opportunities are even greater - but unused.

It reports failures of investigators to investigate with saying it. Both Watergate committee and special prosecutor. Not even an editorial question, why?

AP did report that finding of the Anderson file by the Baker team. (It was not reported but as I'd guessed, it was Thompson, and he did see more than the files Dan Schorr reported.) But AP omitted Bud, who it knows is McCord's and Ray's attorney and knows also that he has an assassination committee. (Thompson is to confirm in writing to Bud.) And these were National Intelligence Board files, according to AP. No questions by AP.

The entire press is cool on the story and all its possible ramifications. This extends even to the scandal sheets. I spoke to Roger Langley of the National Star and to Bill Dick of the National Enquirer, both Tuesday, three days ago. Roger called New York and found no enthusiasm. There has been no word since. As did Roger, Bill thought the new stuff I have is a good story. He was going to take it up. If he has had word, he has not relayed it. Langley could not find out when the Star was going to use the Ford theft-hiding of CIA from WWIV, which they have bought. It could have been out by now. He could not find out when they plan to use. I now wonder "if."

Too bad this is not a Metro desk story with a couple of young reporters anxious to be bought by leaks in return for protection - again.