

Watergate Whitewash Js, HR HW 9/20/72

Phoned Larry about another matter this evening, the AP 9/19 from Baltimore on Judge Northrop'd decision to take the non-existent wraps off the Bremer diary. L reports what he takes to be adequate wire coverage recent Post stories, inc. today's.

Bremer diary: the judge had imposed restrictions relating to federal trial which has not been started. The diary was used in the state trial. It is evidence, which is how I got it. I don't see a) how it is subject to restraints once it is evidence and b) how the public domain can be sold, unless the Brooklyn Bridge is a tie-in. I am also concerned, of course, at the flaunting of and commercializing on illness and at the advertising for more butts to make similar efforts. All they'll have to read is how many times Bremer got inside security, etc.

Today's Post story can have come from but one of two sources: more than one person inside the GOP establishment or federal. The former is improbable. Of the latter, three are possible: FBI, DJ lawyers who have seen FBI reports and office of USAtty for District of Columbia. I favor FBI, which is the agency that investigates leaks, and its self-investigations have never disappointed it.

The whole deal is pretty raw. The FBI may not so regard it, but they can't be unaware of the criticism reasonably leveled or to be leveled. Its investigation was, I presume, exactly as Kleindienst described, equal to that of the JFK assassination. Therein lies its trouble. There have been a few too many such.

The technique is not new. As the FBI leaked then it leaks now, immobilizing those to whom it leaks. The Post has not been clamoring for a real great FBI investigation. It has been saying who can trust Kleindienst to be impartial, etc.

In leaking the stuff that shows GOP destruction of evidence (cleansing to the Post), the FBI persuades the Post that it was not responsible for this sheltering of criminality. It persuades the Post that it did its work well, as it usually does; and that political judgements have been superimposed on it. This could not and would not happen without FBI willingness for it to happen - if it did.

Again I'm not talking about diligent digging. This is the kind of stuff that the best reporter can't dig up. He is dependant upon sources, and the FBI does not leak by accident. It may seem strange that the FBI leaks to the Post, but it has, regularly. My source is the beneficiary of the past, one not sympathetic to my work at all. In cases like this, the FBI is better off leaking to the Post than to its old pal, the Star. It can always retreat to the Star (the Post has been its critic), and the Post knows that if it doesn't take and use the leak, its competition will. And I am without doubt about the authenticity of the info on the destruction of records and some of what they showed. ... And in all of this the spooks are covered, sheltered. Politicians come and go, but spooks are permanent. In this case, no single leak embroiling or embarrassing to the CIA or the FBI. HW

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