

HW 3/31/74

Ben Bradlee has never been friendly toward me. Sometimes he has seen me but never with any display of warmth or friendliness. He saw me several times in the period 4-5/66. Since then, when I have been in the Post newsroom, he has sometimes ignored me entirely and sometimes merely glanced at me. Last Thursday when I was with Barry Sussman and he walked past, he gave me a big, open smile and a vigorous handwave. I was surprised.

The interesting thing is what this follows. If I do not postulate a cause-effect relationship I also believe it can't be ignored, particularly because after what I regarded as a doublecross and breach of trust in May 1966 my dispute with the top Post management was unrestrained.

As soon as there were these new WG indictments, three weeks ago this past Friday, there was an immediate campaign against straight new practises like taking more leaks. It was led by Kraft and Geyelin, in that order. Kraft on TV immediately and then in his column and Geyelin next in an editorial.

I reacted strongly to each, separately, with carbons to Bradley. In each case ~~xi~~ I said my prupose was not publication. I do not remember whether I said no reply was expected or nrcessary.

There has been no reply.

But I can't say there has been no response.

This campaign was aborted, immediately. It has gone no farthur in the Kraft columns or the Post's editorials.

However, I also have seen no analysis of the new indictments. Not as signed articles, not in columns, not in editorials.

It is not possible to make an honest, informed analysis of these indictments without doing what nobody in the press has dared do to date (to my knowledge), and that is call all the indictments and out-of-court deals what they are, cover-ups.

My immediate analysis shows the new ones are the least possible and bring nothing new out. They required no grand-jury investigation.

All the sentences to those who copped pleas are exceptipnally light and are based on the most generous omissions of what could and should have been charged. To date there is no indication that there was a worthwhile quid pro quo for the prosecution in the form of evidence or testimony otherwise not available.

In the obstruction of justice indictments and in those of the Plumbers quite the opposite is true, and I note this based on what I know and can prove alone, not on what could and should have been developed in official investigation.