

Secret Destruction of Howard Hunt's Notebooks Evans-Novak 3/27/74

Lacking time for a complete analysis, these hasty notes on a column that raises but does not answer questions and shows signs of inspiration not indicated.

"Dean's failure to tell the whole truth to the Senate Watergate Committee..." What is not said is "in its public hearings." What is not known is what he may have said that the committee elected not to air publicly. I am not saying that his destruction of these notebooks is such unwanted testimony but I am saying that Dean has said to a committee what it elected not to air or use. Or leak. And the Ervin committee did have it.

This becomes "concealment" in the referred to article by George V. Higgins in the current Atlantic Monthly. Perhaps Dean intended concealment but it is he who voluntarily disclosed it later.

Assuming it to be concealment, is the only possible explanation to hide his own obstructing of justice? Not by any means. For a text see his 4/15/73 to his still Glorious Leader. (In my view this is worse than the accusation of the column and Higgins.)

The conclusion that had he made this disclosure to the Ervin committee it would have lead to hostile cross examination is without merit because he did confess the crime of which this was no more than another instance. He did confess obstructing justice. And as a matter of fact he was subject to unfriendly cross examination. If anyone wants to attack Dean or his credibility, the lack of the wherewithal will not be a problem.

The attack at this point serves one interest only, Nixon's.

It may not be without significance, particularly given Dean's political beliefs, that his disclosure came not only after he made his October deal but after Jaworski replaced Cox. (Disclosure in November and reported.)

It also seems odd that there is not a single word on the content of the destroyed notebooks. Hunt raised the issue in court. The timing not pointed out is the coincidence between Hunt's raising the issue in court and the destruction. This does make it more culpable and of an entirely different character. It not only protects all from the content, and why not include Nixon in "all"? but it may give Hunt what he needs to get his case reversed. (There has to be some basis for Hunt's seeming contentment with his situation as there must be for Sirica's silence on Hunt's six-figure literary efforts after snuffing others, notably McCord, up entirely.)

At the time of the destruction Dean was WH counsel and was in alleged charge of Nixon's alleged investigation and St. Clair claims Nixon is the chief magistrate, so destruction by Nixon's agent can be claimed to have even more significance.

The admitted time also coincides with the honeymoon period and Hunt's decision to cop a plea.

Among the contents of these notebooks is Hunt's contacts. Questioning them could lead to other Nixonian disclosures. Is it not odd that Hunt was never asked (in public anyway) what he remembered of the contents, the names, addresses, reasons and particularly why and how this could have been important evidence in his defense. If my recollection is correct, Hunt was late clamoring for his notebooks. Perhaps not until after they were destroyed, perhaps to encourage it and perhaps to make his demands more attractive.

I believe this business of the notebooks is significant. I think the column directs away from their authentic significance. Plus failing to mention it.

Column concludes by citing WH's alleged grumbling that there was no perjury charge when by no stretch could this have been perjury. Or, there was some contact with the WH or sources with access to what it did "privately."