

# Schorr and Co.—On the Other Side of the Questions

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The line in the Rayburn Building began forming at 6:30 a.m., 3½ hours early; they were college students warned by their professor to expect a mob. "It's on a par with Watergate," said one in front. "It should be a good show, an historical event." "Give him the line about 'the democratic process,'" suggested a classmate, a bit cynical for her age.

It was the House Ethics Committee hearing yesterday on the leaking of the secret Congressional CIA report. And what had drawn the standing-room-only crowd and the torrid TV lights was the spectacle of it all, as well as the principles involved.

Here were to be seen reporters and editors—Dan Schorr of CBS News, Clay Felker, Aaron Latham and Sheldon Zalaznick of the New York Magazine/Village Voice complex—finding out how the other half lives. When the motor-driven cameras clicked, when the questions were asked, they would be the focal point, not the observers;

they would be the ones feeling slightly ill-at-ease. It was, Schorr admitted afterward, "quite weird."

Daniel Schorr was the cause of it all, the man who had received the leaked document and knew who the leaker was. He had prepared for his moments under the lights by enduring 12 hours of intensive questioning at the hands of his attorney, Joseph Califano, said Schorr, "I guess it was the way Joe used to do it with LBJ for press conference question."

Still, Schorr worried, "I was nervous, ever since I got up at 5 this morning. I was going to get up at 7:30, but I woke up at 5, worrying, going over and over it in my mind, afraid that I was going to say something I shouldn't. You know, it's like a big TV show, and you don't want to get up

there and blow it in front of all those lights and cameras and people."

The people from New York were less sure of their place, except to know that it was secondary. Aaron Latham, who wrote the introductory material when the CIA report appeared in the Voice, said before the hearing friends had told him "what I should really be concerned about is all the TV lights going out when I'm on. Though he might feel the same way about me, I think it's simpler to be in Dan's position. There is no head-on confrontation with me."

The baby-blue walled hearing room was, everyone remarked, almost a duplicate of the one where the Water-

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## SCHORR, From E1

gate fuss was made. The witnesses entered with small smiles, embarrassed at the fuss made over them but slightly pleased nevertheless. The order of testimony was Felker, Latham, Zalaznick and Schorr: "A good lead and a good kicker," said Latham.

The New York crowd was noticeably subdued, like youthful scholars on the first day of school. Felker, a press lord of the first water accompanied at the hearing by his star New York magazine reporter, Gail Sheehy, was earnest, attentive and just a little bit hesitant as the committee members and their counsel questioned him. Both he and Zalaznick, who no longer even works for New York Magazine, seemed fearful of being tripped up, of saying the wrong word and having the wrath of God and man pour down on them.

It turned out to be Aaron Latham who was asked the tough questions one would have thought would have been reserved for editor-publisher Felker.

"Did you know the House had voted not to release the report because it contained classified and secret material, did you know that Mr. Latham?" thundered Rep. James Quillen (R-Tenn.), adding that he was a newspa-

per publisher himself at age 19. "You thought you had the authority to go beyond the authority of Congress, you thought you knew more than the House's 435 members?"

"The security of my country," he went on, "means more to me than anything else I can remember at this time. We have only one country, once it's gone, we have nothing else. Newspapers come and go, but our country remains forever."

When Latham stepped down, after being twice warned he was in danger of contempt citations, he looked more than a bit shellshocked. Afterward, he had lunch with CBS correspondent Leslie Stahl at Tiberio.

With Daniel Schorr, it was different. Where the others fidgeted while they spoke, Schorr seemed relaxed, at his ease. He started with a rush, reading a statement which ended by saying, "to betray a source would be for me to betray myself, my career and my life. To say I refuse to do it is not quite saying it right. I cannot do it."

Added attorney Califano, "What is at stake for Mr. Schorr is the core of his entire life." It was almost as if he were an old-time gunslinger, holed up in some saloon, daring the committee to "come and get me."

In its own way, the committee tried.

In a ritual that soon assumed the mannerisms of Japanese Noh drama, counsel John Marshall would ask if such-and-such was the source of the report; Schorr would answer that as a matter of professional conscience he couldn't respond; chairman John Flynt (D-Ga.) would ponderously read an extraordinarily elongated warning about the possibility of contempt, and then the whole thing would start all over again. Counting the morning and afternoon session, Schorr was warned nine times and by the end even some committee members were laughing.

By the afternoon session, Schorr's display of conscience had quite worn the committee down, and even Rep. Quillen ended up saying, somewhat plaintively, "I understand your sincerity, but I wish you would come forth for the benefit of your country."

When he stepped down after some two hours of testimony, there seemed no doubt that he had come out on top.

Reached at home afterward and asked about his celebration plans, Schorr said "at this moment, even as I speak, I'm taking off my shoes. Then I'm going to take a nap. Napas at a time of great tension-release are very important to me. Then the children will be getting home. I will take some time and explain it to the children. They know I had a very important hearing today."