

The President Is, Too, Ignorant



Arthur Hoppe

"THE PRESIDENT obviously has more information than we have," loyal Americans have always said. "Therefore, he must know what he's doing."

They said this all through the Vietnam war, Phases I, II and III, fund impoundments, dollar devaluation, executive privilege, poverty war cutbacks, harassment of the media, the bombing of Cambodia and anything else that was burdensome to understand.

"The President has more information than we have," they would say, going happily about their own business, "therefore, we can safely leave these complex decisions of state up to him."

At least, that's what they always said until White House aide Fred Frisbee resigned after the Washington Monument was found in his office safe.

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WHILE SEVERAL newspapers had reported at the time that the Washington Monument was missing — publishing "before" and "after" photographs — Press Secretary Ronald Ziegler said the White House was certainly not going to comment on "this second-rate burglary."

Matters might have rested there had not Andy Jackerson, a known columnist, revealed that the President had said to his chief of staff two months earlier, "Bob, that darned monument blocks my view from the breakfast table."

Seventeen investigations were launched. These proved the monument had been filched by six Cuban refugees who were paid \$13.2 million by The Committee to Keep the President Happy.

The President immediately issued a vigorous statement. "While I have been too busy eating catsup and cottage cheese to notice that the monument is missing, I have now ordered my most brilliant young aide, Mr. Frisbee, to determine whether Mr. Frisbee stole the monument"—a state-

ment Mr. Frisbee later vigorously denied.

Twenty-three White House aides promptly resigned. The President accepted their resignations with "great regret," adding, "I am confident that these 23 hard-working men were not among the 23 hard-working men seen covering the hole left by the theft of the monument."

Developments followed daily. The disappearance of President Jefferson (a known Democrat) from Mount Rushmore was traced to a team from The Bureau of Weights and Measures headed by the President's third cousin.

The CIA, on White House orders, kidnaped Senator Fulbright's veterinarian from the FBI who had been keeping him from the Commerce Department in a White House safe.

And another White House aide confessed persuading two Yankee baseball players to swap wives. "It was an error in judgment," he said. "I thought the President hated the Yankees."

In each case, Mr. Ziegler, when questioned, said the President stood on his statement of September 3 when he'd been laid up with acute laryngitis.

In the end, of course, everybody was convicted but the President, who proved his ignorance to the complete satisfaction of all.

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"THE PRESIDENT obviously has less information than we have," loyal Americans now said. "Therefore, he must not know what's going on."

Thus it was that Senator George McGovern won the Presidency by a landslide in his second attempt on the slogan: "Vote for a President who's proved he *really* doesn't know what's going on!"

With their faith in Presidential infallibility destroyed, Americans now took the trouble to make their own decisions on complex affairs of state. And this democracy lived happily ever after.