

Nixon Transcripts Sell Like

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President Nixon, the nation's latest overnight literary lion, has become the hottest name in paperbacks since Grace Metalious wrote her epic pot boiler about a mythical New Hampshire town named Peyton Place.

"The only thing we've ever had as big and exciting as this at one given time was 'Peyton Place,' back in 1957," said Milton Oehler, vice president and sales manager of Dell Publishing, the second firm to hit the streets today with a commercial paperback version of the presidential transcripts.

Bantam Books, in conjunc-

tion with the New York Times, won the publishing race of the year by delivering 5,000 copies of its book, *The White House Transcripts*, to District News Co., Inc., in Washington, at about midmorning.

According to Jose Gonzales, book manager for District News, the Trover Shop at 800 15th St. NW went through its original consignment of 200 books in about 2½ hours, and the Trover Shop at 1031 Connecticut Ave. NW sold about 100 books during the same period of time.

In New York City, where Dell, which has published *The Presidential Transcripts* in conjunction with The

Washington Post, reached the book stores about 10 minutes ahead of Bantam, 100 copies were sold in Grand Central Station in one hour.

And the Government Printing Office, which was the first to publish the transcripts, reports that business is still booming at GPO bookstores here and in other cities around the country despite a GPO price tag of \$12.25, compared to \$2.45 and \$2.50 for the commercial versions.

Excluding newspaper reprints, there are now scheduled at least 1.5 million copies of the controversial transcripts for publication in softbound versions.

Dell (\$2.45 a copy) scheduled an initial press run of 700,000 but announced yesterday it would begin printing a second edition of 300,000 Friday.

Bantam (\$2.50 a copy), which set an initial printing of 450,000, said yesterday it is already planning a second edition if sales today seem to warrant it.

The Government Printing Office originally produced 5,000 transcripts but then increased the press run to 15,000 when the original copies sold out almost immediately.

Now the GPO plans a second press run of another 15,000 and will follow that with

Another 'Peyton Place'

a run of 20,000, a spokesman said yesterday.

Because they are putting out essentially the same product, Dell and Bantam raced frantically since last Thursday to be the first to get their books to the public. Dell even went so far yesterday as to charter private Lear Jets to carry small consignments of books to favored customers in Chicago and Washington, and overloaded another plane so badly it had to be partially emptied before it would fly.

Joyce Linthicum, manager of the Walden Book Shop at Montgomery Mall, said she sold 10 copies of the Bantam

book in its first hour on the shelf. "Just about everybody who has come in has bought one," she said. "They come in and say, 'do you have the dirty blue book?'" The GPO version of the transcripts has a blue cover.

According to Gonzales of District News, by today Bantam and Dell should each have 25,000 books in Washington, all but 1,400 of which are already sold to dealers.

But even the paperback price may seem exorbitant to those persons who purchased the complete transcripts for the 10 or 15 cents

charged by the at least nine newspapers across the country that published all the transcripts in a single issue.

The Chicago Tribune, which spent about \$100,000 to fly a special crew of editors and compositors to Washington and back, sold 780,000 copies of the transcripts in its papers last Wednesday and since then has sold an additional 20,000 copies of just the transcripts for 50 cents a piece.

According to the Associated Press, which has sent the complete transcripts to its member papers, a preliminary check indicates that at least seven papers are seri-

alizing all the transcripts, and countless papers are carrying excerpts from the tape recorded conversations.

Although the commercial and newspaper versions of the documents are by far less expensive, many persons seem to prefer the 1,308 page GPO version.

"People are interested in this one as the original," said a GPO spokesman yesterday, attempting to explain the continuing interest in the most expensive version. "They know the paperback is available, but we still have lines of people waiting."