

Sandy Grady
... On the Loose

Will We Get Tidal Wave Of Apology?

Forget that old crude stuff about burglars and wiretaps and funny Mexican money. Those were the brass-knuckle days in the Watergate saga. Where we're going now, White House fans, is into the Era of Humility.

In this stage, we may all get whomped dizzy by olive branches.

The script—well, it's sort of a musical "Last Tango in Washington." There is to be a tidal wave of contrition, as 10,000 doves circle Watergate while Kate Smith sings "God Bless America," and the Kids for Nixon chant "One Thousand, Three Hundred and Fifty More Days — We Hope."



It's all part of the new image. As it was put so well in the movie, "Love Story": "Being President is sometimes having to say you're sorry."

This is not to carp at the President's speech. Okay, some people thought it was—well, oleaginous. Remember, Mr. Nixon was on the outs for 25 years with over 700 million Chinese. If he wants to make up with America, give him a couple of weeks.

But the Era of Humility hits the Washington press hardest. Mr. Nixon and Ron Ziegler and Spiro Agnew last week dazzled 'em with peace signs. Heady stuff—suddenly Team Nixon saw every reporter as St. Thomas Aquinas with a leaky ball-point. It was like reading in the New York Times society section that Fay Wray and King Kong were engaged.

So now, nobody's safe. If the Nixon team can apologize to the press, the Democrats are next on the humility blitz. Their only chance is to fight fire with fire—apologize first.

What Muskie Should Do

The counterattack must begin with Sen. Ed Muskie. Muskie should apologize for being ahead of the President in the 1971 polls—forcing the White House aides to organize all those dirty tricks in New Hampshire.

If Muskie looks in his heart, he'll say he's sorry for disconcerting Team Nixon, postponing the end of the Vietnam War, and sending hamburger to \$2.00 a pound.

Then Hubert Humphrey should apologize. If it was tapping Hubert's phone, the Nixon Flying Squad ran into massive overtime. Why do you think the Nixon agents had \$200,000 flown into Washington in an attache case at midnight? It was the runover on the Hubert Tapes.

And George McGovern—his guilt in the Watergate affair is so deep, it's hard to see how Mr. Nixon can ever forgive him. Team Nixon wanted badly to nominate McGovern—it was frightened by such smashing contenders as John Lindsay and Scoop Jackson. That's why McGovern should apologize—he kept making dumb statements about ending the war, and Nixon had a tough time nominating him.

And Lawrence O'Brien must explain why the Democrats didn't leave their doors open at Watergate, forcing Team Nixon to pick the locks. Were the Democrats afraid of something?

McGovern, at least, should be grateful for the way Team Nixon arranged his convention. Okay, Nixon put in too many bearded, sweat-shirted kids. Some people thought McGovern's speech ("Come home, America!") was mawkish. At least Pat Buchanan, Mr. Agnew's top speech-writer, did his best.

Nixon's Coronation

Everybody must do his part in the Era of Humility. So I'll apologize for not understanding the Nixon Coronation at Miami—particularly the way the Doral Hotel was converted to a seaside fortress of guards, paper-shredders, off-limit signs and electronic eyes. I even zinged Nixon campaign headquarters in Philadelphia for requiring I.D. cards.

Now it's all clear. Those people were protecting us from the awful truth. Okay, Shakespeare said, "Suspicion always haunts the guilty mind"—but, hell, he had long hair.

We must all be contrite for Watergate. Say you're sorry and sing it again, Kate. Remember, we only have one President. So far.