

New Need in U.S. — Truth in Politics

By Jack Anderson
and Les Whitten

It has become part of our political folkways for candidates to spout hokum. For some, lying becomes a habit they cannot break after they are elected to office.

This may explain why so many politicians are willing to place the full weight of the U.S. government behind flagrant falsehoods. At all levels of government, officials play loose with the truth to cover up mistakes, hide corruption and make bad policies look good.

But let an investigative reporter make a mistake or wrongly condemn someone in authority, and there are howls of outrage. Perhaps we may be excused, therefore, if we occasionally remind our readers who has been telling them the truth.

On March 21, 1972, for example, we reported that International Telephone and Telegraph had feared its assets in Chile might be nationalized if Salvador Allende, a Marxist, were installed as President.

To protect its investments, ITT had tried to inveigle the U.S. government to help subvert Chile's constitutional processes. ITT and the CIA had actually plotted together to "create economic chaos in Chile," we reported, "hoping this would cause the Chilean army to pull a coup that would block Allende from coming to power."

White House aides and CIA officials alike categorically denied that the plot against Allende was anything more than an ITT pipe dream. But now, sworn testimony has established that the CIA schemed against Allende not only before but after he became President.

We began another series of columns on May 1, 1972, charging that the FBI, CIA and Secret Service kept dossiers on the private lives of prominent Americans.

Patrick Gray, the acting FBI chief, called a press conference to deny it. "There are no dossiers or secret files," he declared. We responded on May 11 that we would be "happy to tell poor Pat, since he's new around the FBI, where some of the secret files are stashed."

Thereafter, we published the file numbers and quoted excerpts from secret dossiers on political figures, movie stars, football heroes and newsmen. The existence of these FBI-CIA dossiers, of course, is no longer disputed.

Each new development in the unfolding story of the CIA assassination attempts also confirms the details that we first published in a series of columns beginning January 17, 1971. The plotters whom we named have now confessed their participation.

Yet our columns about the assassination plots were summarily denied and dismissed 4½ years ago. "No plot was authorized or implemented to assassinate (Cuban Premier Fidel) Castro, (Dominican dictator Rafael) Trujillo or anyone else," lied former CIA chief John McCone in 1971.

On Nov. 8, 1974, we reported that "military intervention" against Middle East oil sheikdoms had been discussed at the highest Washington levels "as a

last resort" to save the West from "economic ruin." The State Department professed to be aghast at such an idea.

But the following Jan. 2, no less than Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger acknowledged that force might be used—only in the "greatest emergency," of course—to prevent the "strangulation of the industrial world."

Again, we warned on May 27, 1974, that the Greek military junta was in imminent danger of collapse, the State Department pooh-poohed our report. The junta fell two months later.

The political prevaricators have had to swallow dozens of denials since we took over the column in August, 1969. The Chappaquiddick affair was then in the headlines. We reported on Aug. 8 that Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) had arranged for his cousin, Joe Gargan, to take the blame for driving his car off the bridge.

Our story was not only denied but derided. Yet five years later, the Boston Globe assigned a squad of reporters to reinvestigate the incident. They spent several weeks examining every available detail. Their most fascinating finding: "In particular, Kennedy's cousin, Joseph Gargan, agreed at one point to take responsibility for the accident."

The latest attack upon our ac-

curacy has come from Sen. Hiram Fong (R-Hawaii), who called "totally false" our report that he was fronting for the patent lobby. Yet on June 2, his patent aide, Robert Seto, confided in a memo that Fong's patent bill had been written by the patent lobby.

"The actual wordings essentially are from papers submitted to me by such organizations as the American Patent Law Association, the American Bar Association... and by members of various (industry-dominated) patent committees, PPG (Pittsburgh Plate Glass) industries and others who submitted papers and/or letters," wrote Seto.

In other words, the Fong amendments were written by patent lawyers and the industries they serve. Among the corporations that contributed their views were Phillips Petroleum, Westinghouse, Dow Chemical and Allis-Chalmers, to name a few. All would profit from Fong's bill.

Fong's six-page attack on us on the Senate floor is full of falsehoods and distortions.

The politicians on Capitol Hill have promoted truth in lending and truth in advertising. The greater need is for truth in politics.

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