

**Our Man Hoppe****The Great I.P.P.
Mystery Case****Arthur Hoppe**

DEAR SIR: We are in receipt of your manuscript entitled "The Great International Peanuts & Popcorn Mystery Case." It's rotten.

While we agree that in I.P.P. you have created a heartwarming, bumbling old conglomerate that everyone can't help but love, your scandalous attacks on our nation's leaders simply cannot be countenanced.

To briefly review your plot, you would have us believe that this vast corporation hires a drunken old nut named Dotty Whiskers as its top Washington lobbyist. You say she writes a secret memo to her bosses which reads:

"The President says thanks for the \$400,000 we gave the Party and he hopes we make it back quick with our new popcorn concession at his Sunday Prayer Breakfasts and our new Washington Monument Motel in the Washington Monument. Please stuff this up your shredder."

When the known columnist, Andy Jackersen, publishes the memo, you have Mrs. Whiskers quickly decide not to go to Denver where she goes anyway in order to have a heart attack.

Then, after three weeks of trying to explain the memo which is rocking the country, you say she finally remembers the one little clue that cracks the case: She remembers she never wrote the memo in the first place!

So far, so good.

★ ★ ★

AND TO BE fair, we liked the poignant drama in the scene where the Senators fly out from Washington to question Mrs. Whiskers in her hospital bed — because her doctors say it would be good for her weak heart "to get it off her chest."

We frankly enjoyed Mrs. Whiskers' dotty answers to their questions about the memo. (By the way, when she says, "I

never saw the mother," whose mother is she referring to?)

And there's good theater there when they ask her why she didn't recall not writing the memo sooner and she replies, "Aaaaggh!" and clutches her bosom. Moreover, the scene ends well with the shaken Senators hastily departing with the doctors tugging at their sleeves and begging them to ask more hard-hitting questions so the patient will get well quicker.

To be candid, we also admired the mystery you built up about the memo itself. Let's see, the FBI examines it and says it looks bona fide. But I.P.P. says its analysts can tell it's a fake — even though no one gave it to them to analyze. That's great mystery writing.

Your master touch is when I.P.P. says it knows the memo is a fake because it's dated June 25, 1971 — a day Mrs. Beard wasn't even in the office. As proof, they produce the genuine, innocuous memo she actually wrote — also dated June 25, 1971.

You obviously have brilliant talent when it comes to intriguing mystery fans everywhere.

★ ★ ★

WHAT WE vigorously object to is your smearing our nation's leaders. We are not speaking here of the Senators callously walking out of the hospital refusing to help Mrs. Whiskers get well by asking her more hard-hitting questions. Everyone knows Senators are heartless.

It is your conclusion that the memo is indeed, a fake and the President and his aides never gave I.P.P. one single thing in return for their \$400,000. Would you have us believe they simply pocketed the money? You are implying, sir, that our President is a cheat!

We strongly urge you to give up fiction and henceforth stick to the facts.

Sincerely Yours,
Bottlesby & Co., Publishers