

KPFA 17 October 1972
6p.m. news

[Announcer reads brief outline of Mrs. Katherine Worden's suit in Washington, D.C., against GOP, CREEP et al and plays tape from KPFT-Houston whose Scoop Sweeney has talked with Mrs Worden and plays a tape of a telephone interview with her.]

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She says that she had previously, before placing the ads in the Miami dailies, done the same thing in newspapers throughout both Ohio and Kansas, and in each case had got very heavy response from readers in telephone calls, people coming round to discuss the war, etc. As in Miami, she had invited such calls and told in the ads how to get in touch with her.

But in Miami, on the first day the ads appeared, she was surprised to get no response, and the first came from John Gardner, head of Common Cause, who told her that when he called the Fontainebleau and asked for her he was first told there was no one by that name staying at the hotel. But because he had seen me and knew I was staying there he kept insisting and finally was put through.

She said she next heard from Mary McGrory, who told her the operator asked whether the call was personal or to answer the ad. Ms. McGrory said that was a funny thing to ask her.

Mrs. Worden said she then got an outside line and put in a call for herself, as she had two phones. The hotel asked her if ~~it~~ the call was personal or to answer the ad. Mrs. Worden said she couldn't see how this was any of the operator's business and to please put the call through. The operator replied that they had to ask this question. Mrs. Worden asked who said they had to, and why? They had their orders, said the operator. Mrs. Worden said she still didn't see what she was going to talk about could concern the operator, who then said she wouldn't put the call through unless she did respond to the question.

So then Mrs. Worden said she said all right, it's in response to the ad. "So then she went away and finally, came back and said the line is busy."

"Actually I had two telephones, in two adjacent rooms, and the phone in the other room didn't ring."

"I then began to hear from various people who came to my room that this had been going on. I had been unaware of it at the beginning. But the people who came to my room all said they had been quizzed by the operator about the purpose of their call, and if they said it was in response to the ad they were given all kinds of -- they were given the shuffle-around, and their calls were not put through. When they said it was personal their calls were put through.

"Later, the reason I'm suing the Republican National Committee and the FBI and the Secret Service and all that batch of people is because after I reported this to various reporters who came to my room, the reporters went off and talked to the manager and different people in management in the hotel, and the manager and various personnel in the management of the hotel told the reporters that they were screening my calls ~~on~~ upon the orders of the Republican National Committee, ^{that} and it was a security question, and that the security at the hotel was being handled by this combine of FBI and Secret Service and so forth."

Sweeney then recounts how she told a news conference in Washington today how she placed ads in three Miami daily newspapers.

Sweeney: The ACLU claims in its lawsuit that shortly after the ads were published, one or more ^{employees} of the hotel "acting at the direction of the security forces of the defendants Republican National Committee and the Committee for the Re-election of the President ordered hotel telephone operators to 'screen, monitor and

intercept all telephone calls to Katherine Worden."

The ACLU said the action violated Mrs. Worden's to speech, political activity and privacy.

KPFA announcer: In Miami Beach, Ben Novak, the owner of the Fontainebleu Hotel, said today, "We know nothing about this, but I can tell you we here at this hotel don't take orders from anybody, Democrats or Republicans." He said "When this house is running full our operators are so full of telephone calls I can't even get the hotel on the phone. And here this woman wanted thousands of people to call her." He said "We've only got 50 outside jacks and she was probably tying up all of them. If she had wanted to talk to thousands of people, why the hell didn't she put in a private phone. The Republicans did."
